

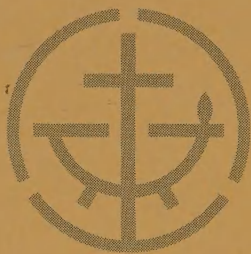
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ARTISAN  
MISSIONARY  
ON THE  
ZAMBESI

JOHN MAC CONNACHIE



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AN ARTISAN MISSIONARY  
ON THE ZAMBESI









*Frontispiece.*

WADDELL AND HIS BOYS.



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AN ARTISAN MISSIONARY  
" ON THE ZAMBESI

BEING THE LIFE STORY OF  
WILLIAM THOMSON WADDELL  
LARGELY DRAWN FROM HIS  
LETTERS AND JOURNALS

BY  
REV. JOHN MacCONNACHIE, M.A.  
" UDDINGSTON

WITH INTRODUCTION BY C. W. MACKINTOSH,  
AUTHOR OF "COILLARD OF THE ZAMBESI"

AMERICAN TRACT SOCIETY  
150 NASSAU STREET, NEW YORK

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PRINTED IN EDINBURGH, SCOTLAND

To  
ISABELLA WADDELL  
THE SHARER OF A BROTHER'S CROSS  
AND  
THE LIGHT AND COMFORT OF HIS LIFE  
THROUGH TWELVE DARK YEARS

A1705

## INTRODUCTION

It is a great pleasure to be allowed to prefix a few lines to William Waddell's life-story, which Mr. MacConnachie has written so graphically and sympathetically. My dear uncle and aunt, M. and Mme. Coillard, felt the warmest affection for him, and the warmest gratitude also, knowing that, humanly speaking, it was his mechanical skill which had captivated the material minds of the Barotsi rulers, and had thus secured not only an open door, but a permanent footing for the Mission in their midst. The apostle's word, "*I am made all things to all men . . . that I might by any means gain some,*" must even to-day be the guiding principle of Mission work, and in Africa industrial missions seem to be the most suitable and acceptable. Herein, however, lurks a great danger; many people, both black and white, would like a policy of "industry" without the "Mission." The mighty civilisations of the past, all crumbled to dust, bear witness to the end of this so-called "Gospel of Labour." "*Thou hast praised the gods of silver and gold, brass and iron, wood and stone, . . . and the God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified.*"

It needs something more than improvement of material conditions to raise the heathen, and Waddell's

great aptitude for the work to which he was called lay just in this, the entire simplicity of heart and mind which looked on everything with a single eye to God's glory, and sought to display that glory to these poor ignorant natives in the small matters that lay ready to his hand. For instance, when King Lewanika consulted him about boat-building, he at once referred him to the Divine pattern in creation; showed him how the fish required a spine and ribs, and a boat must follow the same design. It was this same simplicity that made him a hero, and that with the most entire absence of self-consciousness. To kill twenty mad dogs in one season was all in the day's work. Cheerfully, without a hint or a suggestion from outside, he gave up the furlough that might (as we now see) have saved his career, in order to establish the work at the Capital, because he knew there was no one else to carry out the necessary building. And when he was called to his last fiery ordeal, he took it all in the same calm, almost matter-of-fact way, with no implied reproaches of God or man.

I last saw him about three years before the end, and he spoke of the words which had finally led him to volunteer for the Zambesi, "I beseech you therefore, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice . . . which is your reasonable service." As he sat there, a man in the prime of life, crippled, helpless, blind, and suffering constant pain, an involuntary question sprang to one's lips, at the thought of what that *living sacrifice* had been.

“Tell me, do you *never* regret it?” He replied with unforgettable emphasis, “*Never!* Yes, and if it was to be done over again, knowing all that it was to cost, I would do it and count it an honour, for the sake of serving Christ.”

It was this patient continuance in well-doing that made his life such a beautiful example. Many artisan missionaries in Africa have given up their specially appointed task for the sake of preaching only. It is Waddell's special praise that he had the secret of evangelising *through* his work and *by* his life. His words on page 89 might well be the motto of every lay-helper: “How could the tabernacle have been built if the craftsmen had wanted to do Aaron's work? But in a country like this . . . the craftsman would almost need to have the qualities of the priest.” If this little book should help to send even one such craftsman to the mission field, it will not have been written in vain.

C. W. MACKINTOSH.

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# AN ARTISAN MISSIONARY ON THE ZAMBESI

## CHAPTER I

### EARLY YEARS

ALL the world knows the heroic work that was done by François Coillard, in opening up Central Africa to civilisation and the Gospel. But many have yet to learn how greatly he was helped, in the early years of pioneering in that deadly climate, by a young Scotch carpenter, who, though dying far from the scene of his labours, laid down his life as truly as did Coillard for his Master.

The romantic story of how a lad, born in Lanarkshire, in Scotland, and the son of a farmer of Asnières-les-Bourges, in France, were drawn together by their common love of Christ to preach the Gospel in the Barotsi Valley, the one by his lips, the other by his hands, it is the purpose of the following chapters to tell.

William Thomson Waddell was born at Whifflet, near Coatbridge, on 31st March, 1858, but removed as a child to Duntocher on the Clyde, where his early years were spent. He grew up in a pious, God-fearing home. His father, David Waddell, who was over-ground manager with Messrs. Merry & Cuninghame, Coal and Iron Masters, in Garscadden, was a man of strong Christian character, a devoted member and office-bearer of the Free Church of Scotland, and a teacher

in the Sabbath School. From his mother, Janet Thomson, who had read widely as a girl the stories of the missionaries, especially of Moffat and Livingstone, and who loved in later years to repeat them to her children, he inherited his missionary enthusiasm.

As a boy, William was very delicate and his school life much broken. This early weakness made him shy and timid, and extremely sensitive to the slightest harshness. "He did not mix with the general crowd of the village boys, or play our games," writes a younger contemporary,\* "and I am afraid we had rather a barbaric way of dismissing such a timid boy." In mere book-learning he showed no special cleverness, but very early began to reveal those remarkable mechanical aptitudes which were later to be the wonder of the Barotsi, and to earn him the name on the Zambesi of *Ganguro*, "the man who knows all works." "If he was not the sharpest boy," writes this same early friend, "he always had the sharpest knife, and no one could point a pencil like Willie Waddell." The story is told that as a boy of ten he went to see the first reaping-machine that came to the district. The farmer was surveying his purchase somewhat ruefully, for it could not be got to work. "I think if you will take out that pin it will go all right," said William, after looking at it quietly for a few minutes, and the farmer's trouble was ended. In course of time his skill became quite famed, and when anything went wrong, be it reaper or sewing-machine, his ready help was called in. He fitted up a little workshop in his home, in which he spent many happy hours. Unconsciously he was preparing himself for his life-work.

\* Rev. Hugh Macluskie.

Already also his mind was dwelling on deeper things. He had grown up like Timothy, loving goodness from his mother's knee, but about the age of fifteen he underwent a spiritual experience which gave a new direction to his life. "I very well remember," writes another early friend,\* "that about the year 1873, coming up from Duntocher Free Church, he told me of his conversion a few days previously. He said he had told his father and mother, and I daresay I was the next to learn from his own lips, that he had accepted the Lord Jesus as his own personal Saviour. 'It is a grand thing to be a Christian,' he said." From this time the ambition possessed him to be a missionary, and Africa was from the first the land which fascinated him. But with his defective education and great diffidence as to any capacity for study, the way seemed meantime closed. His parents apprenticed him to the village joiner, with whom he gained a knowledge of all kinds of practical work, smithy work included. He could not have been put to a better school. After a time he went to complete his apprenticeship as a ship-joiner with the firm of James & George Thomson, Clydebank, walking backwards and forwards the three miles every day. In the rough and tumble of the yard, his tender and sensitive nature suffered much. But of that moral courage which often accompanies natural timidity he had a full share. Suffer what he might in feeling, by taunt and jibe, he manfully stood up for his principles, and often, by a natural readiness of rejoinder which never failed him, was able to turn the tables on his tormentors. One day, as he was at

\* Mr. Daniel Ramsay.

work, a blustering infidel came up to him with the question, "Waddell, where is God?" "I will tell you a far more wonderful thing than that," he answered, "I will tell you where He is not." "Well, where?" said the man. "God is not in all the thoughts of the wicked." And the infidel turned on his heel without another word.

His companions did what they could to get him to swear. One of them smashed before his eyes, as he thought, a little plane, which he had been making with great pains in his leisure hour, and waited for the expected outburst. All Waddell said was, "I did not think you would have done that to me," and the man, chagrined, took the plane from under his coat, having really smashed another.

One other incident from those early days in the shipyard may be given. It is the custom for an apprentice at his "pay-off," that is, when he completes his time, to stand drinks to his mates all round. When it came to Waddell's turn he refused. They carried him forcibly into a public-house, but he persisted in his refusal. He offered however to stand them a good dinner, if they would consent to drink nothing but water. To this at last they agreed, and they went off together to Glasgow and spent a pleasant afternoon. All this goes to show that beneath that timid and gentle exterior there was even then a rare moral strength. In course of time his fellow-workmen came to recognise his worth. They carried their troubles to him as to one they could trust, and when later he left for Africa, they subscribed for him a handsome present. Still he suffered much, and gruff, unkind words that had been used to him in the shipyard

tormented him even on the Zambesi, and rankled to the end of his life.

After his apprenticeship was out, he experienced the usual vicissitudes of unemployment, times being dull, but found an opening at last with his old firm, who, recognising his fine craftsmanship, entrusted to him much of their finer work. All this time the desire to be a missionary burned on, but no path seemed to open. Meanwhile, he did what religious work he could ; from a very early age he taught in the Sabbath School, and there are some who still remember his power of enlisting the interest and affection of the children. But he felt that the only effective work he would ever be able to do for his Master must be with his hands.

From Clydebank he went to Belfast and spent some time in the shipbuilding yard of Harland & Wolff. While there his eyes happened to alight on an advertisement for some joiners to go out to Bethlehem, in the Orange Free State, to the building of a new Dutch Reformed Church, for which a Scotchman named MacArthur had the contract. The pay was to be seventeen shillings a day. This seemed to be the very opening of a door to the land that from boyhood had fired his imagination. Once there, he would be nearer the fulfilment of his dream. He offered to go, and was accepted. His parents, fearing that he was being attracted by the money, were at first reluctant to let him go. "Willie," said his mother, "if it is for the money, I would rather that you did not go." "That is not my reason for going," was his answer, and all objection was withdrawn. Thus in a way, in which he afterwards saw the clear guidance of God,

there was set before him an open door. Having bidden an affectionate farewell to his parents, one of whom he was never to see again, he took train to London, joined the s.s. *Nubian* at Southampton on 17th March, 1882, and sailed for Africa.

On the voyage out he began to keep a journal, which he continued with more or less regularity to within a year of his leaving the country, sending it home to his parents in the form of letters. It lacks that personal note which gives chief piquancy to a diary, for he was modest, almost to morbidity; it is mostly silent as to his deeper life, about which he always maintained a close reserve, but it is full of keen and shrewd observation of men and things, and affords us many interesting glimpses of his short but tragic career.

One of his earliest entries shows that his mind was much with those he had left behind. "I enjoyed the sail, but my thoughts were so bent on them I had left at home, that it kept me from enjoying it to the full." Tenderest hearted of men, the well of his tears was never hard to reach. But as the voyage continued, he passed from under the cloud, and began to be deeply interested in his new surroundings. His fellow-tradesmen going out to Bethlehem had few of his interests, and he wearied greatly on his first Sabbath at sea because there was no religious service. His practical mind began to record each day the run of the ship. A flying visit to Madeira produced an excellent pen-sketch of the place, containing among others the laconic entry, "I never saw the match of Madeira for beggars." March 31st contains this entry,





*Page 16.*

W. T. WADDELL IN 1882.



“ My birthday ; I was twenty-four years old when on board the *Nubian*.” On 10th April Table Mountain was sighted, and the same day they steamed into Capetown, where he went ashore. The unpaved condition of the streets, the new graving-dock, the kind of stones of which it was being built, everything was noted. Nothing escaped his keen eyes. His first sight of the South African native also greatly interested him.

Their point of disembarkment being Durban, they continued the voyage along the coast ; but he seems to have grown weary of doing nothing, for we find him at work with the ship carpenter. The heart of the Scot comes out in his note on Port Elizabeth : “ The sun rose across the town, and it reminded me of some of our Clyde watering-places, such as Largs.” We have a glimpse at East London of the passengers being lowered in a basket by winch into a steam-lighter in a rough sea. As they approach Port Natal, a hill covered with brushwood reminds him of Dumbarton Rock.

On 22nd April he landed in the new country in rather low spirits, but at the sight of MacArthur, junr., who was waiting, took heart, and having signed his agreement before a magistrate in Durban, started by train for Pietermaritzburg, where the first Sunday in Africa was spent. The rest of the journey, which was made by horse conveyance, occupied ten days. They crossed the Tugela, passed through Colenso, outspanning each night, and sleeping in the open. A team of sixteen oxen took their waggon and luggage over the Drakensberg Mountains into the Orange Free State. Passing through Harrismith, they arrived

on 3rd May, 1882, at Bethlehem, where they were met by Mr. MacArthur, their new master, and two days later started work on the new Dutch Reformed Church. He had reached the land of his dreams.

## CHAPTER II

### IN SIGHT OF HIS DESTINY

BETHLEHEM was only some twenty years old, and numbered but eight to nine hundred of a white population. It was little more than a trading centre to which the Boers brought their farm produce, and gathered for the quarterly *Nachtmaal* (Sacrament), an event in a Dutch community similar to a Highland Communion. Waddell's life from the first was most unhappy. He found himself among a rough, drinking, swearing set, who had no sympathy with his ideals, and made sport of his piety. But he boldly showed his colours, joined the Wesleyan Church, and before a month was out, had been enrolled a teacher in the Sabbath School. The zeal with which he threw himself into the work is seen from his diary, which faithfully records each week the Sabbath School lesson. The minister of the church, a Mr. Winyan, who was later to prove a strange link in his life, became a true friend, and his weekly visit to the manse was one of the few bright spots in his otherwise dismal environment. With his missionary zeal always alive, he began to take an interest in the natives, and we find him at the opening of a church which they had built entirely at their own expense. He did not know their language, but he writes:

“Occasionally I go to hear the children sing. Though in a strange tongue, it is sweet, and reminds me of the hymn, ‘Babes and sucklings, artless slaves, shall proclaim the Saviour’s praise.’ They are but babes, and need our sympathy, who have had so many privileges handed down to us from ages.”

Bethlehem lay on the road from Natal to Kimberley, and every now and then great crowds of Zulus passed to and from the diamond fields. These his master hired from time to time at very low wages, serving out Indian corn to them twice a day, and putting them up in a rough extemporised shelter against a wall. Waddell was thus brought early face to face with the native problem in its different forms. He was greatly shocked by the manner in which the natives were treated by both Boers and English. While by a few of the whites they were treated kindly, by many they were handled as animals. “It is true,” he says, “that there are no slaves in South Africa, as we term slaves, but although they are hired, they are treated in many cases as such. When the master wants anything of his native servant, he calls out, ‘Kaffir, come here,’ instead of calling him by name. The native does not like this any more than a dog does. But many times I have heard the master say to his servant, ‘Get out, you dog!’”

On the common complaint, heard to weariness in South Africa, that when the native learns English, and becomes Christian and civilised, he is no more good for anything, Waddell makes the shrewd comment: “The fact is, he is no more good for being the white man’s slave.” “Get hold of a man,” he says, “who is a Christian in reality, and he will tell

you that a native Christian makes by far the best servant, and when the master takes a human interest in him, becomes warmly attached to him, and looks well after his interests." Thus Waddell took up from the first the cudgels for the natives. The time was to come when they would return his love in full measure.

The opening of the church at which he had been working, in the November of the same year, coinciding as it did with the quarterly Sacrament, and a review of the Burghers by the President of the Orange Free State, gave Waddell an opportunity of seeing something of Boer life which he did not fail to profit by. We cannot do better than transcribe a few passages from his lively journal:—

"This is perhaps the greatest day that Bethlehem has seen. Boers are congregating from all parts of the state for the opening of the Dutch Reformed Church and the *Nachtmaal*. The English trader looks forward to this day as a harvest, as the Boers bring their whole families with them in tent waggons, Cape carts, or spiders. They display a great pride in their turnout. Each tent waggon is loaded with produce—wool, and such like—while the top part answers as a bedroom. A bed-bottom is placed above the stuff, made of hard native wood, with cords of raw hide interwoven across, which, with a skin or two and a blanket, makes a good bed. If the family is too large, a tent is pitched beside the waggon, and serves as a sitting-room by day and a bedroom by night.

"At Sacrament time Bethlehem looks as if it were holding a fair. It is quite a sight to take a walk through the town and see the waggons and tents of



the Boers, with their families congregated together, some singing hymns or psalms, others in the height of business. The English trader, but more especially the German Jew, knows how to flatter the Boer and open the strings of his purse, by telling him how well his 'guid-wife' looks in her new dress. The canteens are also doing a good trade among those Boers and English who have come more for pleasure than spiritual food. One can hear from the outside the jabbering of the Dutchmen, talking about their oxen and waggons. A Scotch term day resembles this fair in some respects, but while our countrymen make fools of themselves by drink, here you see big young men going about blowing penny whistles like boys of six years old."

His diary goes on to describe the opening of the new church. With much solemnity, the ruling elder, a good old Dutchman named Müller, carried the books at the head of a procession from the old building to the new, and a choir of over a hundred voices led the praise. A breeze arose over the discovery that some English youths had been included in the choir to help the singing, but Müller pacified the malcontents by telling them that there would be English to sing with them in heaven. The climax of the event was reached however, when President Brand drove in from Bloemfontein under a triumphal arch, in a Cape cart drawn by four horses, to review the Burghers. The review, which consisted of 300 Boers dressed in corduroys and mounted on little ambling horses, with two pieces of artillery, did not greatly impress him.

The New Year holidays (1888) brought another

welcome release from labour. One of the days was spent in a visit to a Boer farm. "It is very pretty," he writes, "to approach a Free State farm, especially at this time of the year, when all the trees are green, and those in the orchard hanging with fruit. We off-saddled and had a cup of coffee. Then the farmer took us over the premises. There is no need of many buildings on a Boer farm, as the cattle are never under a roof, but are herded out all day long by a native boy, and brought into an enclosure at night, called a kraal. The Boer's pride is in his cattle and horses, which he shows with great delight. We then proceeded to the orchard and garden, which was by far the most interesting to us. It was about one acre in extent, and thick with trees all hanging with fruit, apples, peaches, apricots, and pears. One of our company remarked, 'I wonder if the Garden of Eden was like this.'"

Another visit made the same day brought Waddell unexpectedly in sight of his destiny. It was the last day of his holidays, and he spent the evening with Mr. Winyan, his minister. As the conversation of this evening was to prove the turning-point of his life, we must transcribe the account of it in full from his journal: "Passing from one subject of conversation to another, we found ourselves talking of the Dutch and native languages. Mr. Winyan remarked that he had been speaking French for the last two days on a French mission station in Basutoland, and that the missionary had preached for him the other Sabbath. 'Oh,' I said, 'I was deeply interested in that man. His subject was, "The harvest truly is great but the labourers are few." He has rekindled in me the

interest I already had in mission work.' On this Mr. Winyan said: 'By the way, Mr. Coillard is on the lookout for a Christian young man of your trade to go with him as an artisan missionary; would you like that kind of work?' I replied, 'I would be only too glad if I were of any use, but I am afraid I shall not suit, as I can work only with my hands.' On this he said, 'You would be invaluable to him, but, remember, you cannot make money, as you are now doing.' 'That's nothing to me if I can be of any use,' I said. 'It is strange,' said Mr. Winyan, 'I never thought of you; I thought of another young man who has left Bethlehem.' I inquired where Mr. Coillard was going, and why he was leaving Basutoland, and to what Society or Church he belonged. So Mr. Winyan told me what he knew, that Mr. Coillard had been up to the Zambesi a few years ago, and finding what seemed a good field for a new mission, went home to France and got the sanction of the Society to go. He was now waiting for someone to take his place in Basutoland. 'But would you be willing to go?' he said again. 'Certainly I would,' I replied, 'if I can be of any use.' 'If it were nothing but your example,' he said, 'it would do good.' I said, 'I am about tired of the life I have; I like my trade, but it is long since I wished to serve God in this way. Often have I asked myself what work for Christ I could get to do. But I never had the courage to apply for such work lest I should not be qualified.' Then he said, 'Do not be too uplifted about it, remember that though you be in such work, you will find the devil before you on the Zambesi. . . .' But how was I to get free from my engagement with

MacArthur? Mr. Winyan said he would break the ice for me, and I left the house, thanking him for his promise and kindness in opening for me a new kind of life which I have longed to have."

So within a year of his landing in Africa, Waddell saw a path begin to open for the fulfilment of his boyish dreams. He was to be well tried before he could enter on it, but the trial only confirmed his resolution. It was the opportunity for which his life had been waiting.

A little must now be told of François Coillard, with whom Waddell's life was henceforward to be so closely linked.

In 1828 a missionary revival swept over the Protestant Churches of France, and the Paris Missionary Society was formed. But where could a field of operations be found? At that time French Protestants were debarred from doing missionary work in their own colonies. While the question was under discussion, an appeal came through the agent of the London Missionary Society in Capetown from the Supreme Chief of the Basutos for the establishment of a mission in Basutoland. This was taken as the divine opening of a door, and three missionaries left in 1833 for Africa. Basutoland was at this time an independent little state hidden away among the Drakensbergen, to the west of Natal. The Basutos were a fine race, with a keen intelligence, and a high idea of honour and justice. Unlike the warrior tribes, such as the Matabele, they had a sense for organised government, practised agriculture, and loved peace. Among these people, Christianity, under the direction of the French missionaries, made rapid progress.

To this mission in 1858 came François Coillard, a young Frenchman of great zeal and promise, and at his own request was given a pioneer station in Leribé. Coillard belonged to the yeoman class, having been born on 17th July, 1834, at Asnières-les-Bourges, the place where Calvin practised as a lawyer. His parents were devoted Protestants, and he numbered Huguenot martyrs among his ancestors. Two years after his birth, his mother was left a widow in deep poverty with seven children, and had to take a situation as housekeeper at a castle, where little François spent his early years herding turkeys, and reading and re-reading his only book, the Gospels. His mother, a woman of noble character and strong piety, dedicated him to the ministry, and very early the desire awoke in him to be a missionary ; but this was only a childish sentiment. When he was seventeen, an appeal from the Paris Missionary Society stirred the old dream, and he said to his mother, "Why should I not become a missionary?" But the mother was reluctant, and the impulse again ebbed. He had yet to undergo a deep religious experience before he should be ready. This came through hearing read in church a tract by Ryle, afterwards Bishop of Liverpool, entitled, "Wheat or Chaff?" and issued in a spiritual conversion of a strongly individual character, which coloured his whole life and conception of missionary work. Another appeal from the Paris Missionary Society reached him, and the desire to be a missionary returned with clamant urgency. But what of his mother? Her first reply was a cry of pain that made his heart bleed. But after a time she wrote: "My child, I understand now that God is calling you. Go, I will

not keep you back." He was accepted by the Paris Missionary Society, and after six years of study, was ordained in Paris in 1857 for the Basuto Mission.

One other factor must be mentioned to make our history complete, his marriage. Before he left Paris, he had met a young Scotch lady, Christina Mackintosh, daughter of a Baptist minister in Edinburgh, and felt from the first that only with her could his life be complete. She was a woman of great gifts and force of character. Her brothers and sisters named her as a girl the Heroine, so early did she begin to show a mind of outstanding courage. After months of lonely struggling at Leribé, with no Christian fellowship, and with nothing in his ears from morning till night but the shouting and brawling of the heathen, cooking his own food, keeping his own house, Coillard wrote and asked her to become his wife. But she declined on the ground of imperfect acquaintance. After two years he wrote again, and this time, believing it to be a divine call, she accepted. When he met her at Capetown her first words were: "I have come to do the work of God with you, whatever it may be, and remember this, wherever God may call you, you shall never find me crossing your path of duty."

In his wife Coillard found the complement of himself. This noble pair spent the next twenty years in the Basuto Mission, chiefly at Leribé. They found it a wilderness, and left it a garden, with a beautiful Gothic church and an attached native congregation.

How did they come to leave it? A desire arose

among the Basuto Christians to undertake some Foreign Mission work, and the missionaries, believing that in no other way could their religious life be fully developed, gave them all encouragement. So it was resolved to organise a mission to the Banyai, a heathen tribe in Mashonaland. Some of the French missionaries must head the expedition, and the choice fell on the Coillards. They were on the point of leaving for Europe, on their first furlough, but willingly obeyed the call. The expedition proved a failure. After endless hardships and vicissitudes, they were made prisoners by Lo Bengula, the Matabele king, who claimed suzerainty over the Banyai. He detained them for three months in his Kraal at Buluwayo, and in the end expelled them from the country with a definite refusal. Hearing that there was a tribe on the Zambesi who spoke the same language as the Basutos, Coillard pressed forward in the hope of finding there a field. He crossed the Zambesi, got in touch with King Robosi (later named Lewanika), and obtained permission to found a mission in his dominions. With this achieved, he returned to Basutoland, and a few months after sailed for Europe. He travelled through France, England, and Scotland rousing interest and raising funds for his new venture. It was far beyond the resources of the Basuto Church; his own Society, while giving its hearty approval, could not face the burden of financing so unpromising an undertaking, and the responsibility for finding the money fell largely on himself. Having won friends, including some very warm and generous supporters in Scotland, he returned to Basutoland to organise the expedition. This was the work he was engaged in when he preached the



sermon that won the heart of Waddell. Speaking of the incident in after years, he would say, "I put in my hook to catch a fish that day in Bethlehem, and I caught you."

So, through the mysterious providence of a casual sermon, these two men were brought together: Waddell to find the man who was to open the door of hope to him, and become the highest inspiration of his life; Coillard to find the one man, perhaps in Africa, able to fill the vacant post, and face the summons of the Zambesi with a devotion as fervid as his own.

## CHAPTER III

### ON THE ROAD NORTHWARD

THE Basuto Christians were at first full of zeal for what they proudly called "our own mission," but the long delay and past disappointments had done much to cool it, and Coillard was finding his task as organiser a most depressing experience. In place of the enthusiastic volunteers of a few years ago, he could hardly obtain hired servants to face the perilous journey; and some even of his own friends were beginning to shake their heads. An unsolicited offer therefore from a Scotch artisan, whom he had never seen, came as a great surprise, and his first letter to Waddell was written in a somewhat incredulous spirit. "He says he is glad to see I have a desire to do mission work," writes Waddell in his journal, "but thinks I do not quite understand what I am proposing. He says it is a most unhealthy and deadly place where he is going, that his mission is poor, and he does not advise me to go unless I see it to be a call from God. He invites me to visit him if I am in earnest about it."

If Waddell did not at first realise the full extent of the sacrifice, he was to be well searched and proved before he should be allowed to enter upon it. Coillard, like his Master, Christ, believed in taking all would-be

disciples round and showing them the steepest side of the hill. "We are poor and go to a deadly climate," he wrote again; "no one ought to follow us unless called by Him who has always led us, and is prepared to forsake all worldly prospects, and his very life."

A job at Thlotse Heights, within a few miles of Leribé, to which he was sent, brought Waddell the welcome opportunity of meeting the French missionary. His first meeting was not encouraging. Coillard, who seldom erred in judgment, seems to have imagined that there was hardly grit enough in this shrinking, diffident Scot. "He answered every question I asked with pleasure, but he did not give me much encouragement," Waddell writes, "and I began to think he did not want me. Next day he took me into his study and cross-questioned me as to my intentions, as he wanted to prove me, and this time he seemed satisfied with all I said. It is quite a different thing applying for a situation like this from any I have had yet. *Character* is the principal thing, whereas, with a contractor, *hands* are the principal thing."

During his stay in Basutoland he made frequent visits to Leribé, saw the vast changes wrought on the native character by the Gospel, and fell more and more in love with mission work. "Every night," he writes, "we see passing here young women led out by an elderly woman, wearing masks or veils, painted in a most horrible fashion, and screaming, rather than singing, hideous songs. They go to the rocks all day to bewail their virginity. What a contrast this to a Christian native wedding I saw the other evening! The bride and bridegroom, dressed gaily

went marching arm in arm, with a company singing hymns."

His companions did everything they could to dissuade him from what they called an "act of suicide," but his resolution only became the firmer. At last came the day that fixed his choice. He attended a prayer-meeting in Coillard's house, at which the Basutos, going to the Zambesi, were present. Coillard read Romans xii. 1, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." "He exhorted us on these words," writes Waddell, "but the text was quite sufficient for me. I said to myself, I see it; yes, I will go to the Zambesi; I no longer halt between two opinions." Next day the seal was laid upon his choice as he sat at the Lord's Table in the native church. As Coillard handed the bread and wine he quoted a text to each in turn. "When handing me the bread, he said so reverently, 'Love not the world,' that I completely broke down. I felt, although coming from human lips, it was a message from my Saviour." Having made his decision, he communicated it to his parents, who gave their cordial acquiescence. "I am glad to learn," he writes in his next letter, "that you are now so proud of what I am about to do. I know, mother, you were always in favour of my going, only you thought I was not strong enough; but that will be tested by-and-by. You are the first person who made me think of Africa's need of a Saviour. I could not hate an African and love you."

Understanding that the expedition would start immediately, he obtained release from his master, that

he might be ready to join it at any moment. He took farewell of his class at Bethlehem, telling them he was going up country with a missionary, and hoped that some of them would one day follow him.

This was in the end of May, 1883, but seven months were still to elapse before the actual departure.\* So he was now to be tried by waiting. A civil war broke out in Basutoland between two rival chiefs; it raged hotly round Leribé, old men and children being murdered in the very mission premises, whither they had fled for protection. In these precarious circumstances, Coillard could not leave his flock, and he wrote to Waddell offering to set him free. But he had no wish to be free, and spent the next months doing odd jobs, when he could obtain them, and on idle days shooting wild duck. From a boy he had been an expert shot.

He worked for some weeks at the store of a Polish Jew, who formed so high an opinion of his skill that he offered to give him wood to build a work-shop, but he told him that the first work-shop he hoped to build would be somewhere on the Zambesi.

Two months were spent on a Boer farm, where he found life more congenial, but victuals more scanty than with the Jew. "A working-man at home would not like to do a hard day's work after a meal at a Boer table," he writes; "their brown bread is good, but they are sparing with it. A sheep is killed occasionally, which is a pleasant change from the everyday *biltong* and salt meat. There are no vegetables, and mealies are used in place of potatoes. Coffee is given at every meal; it is coffee, coffee all day long; coffee before starting work, coffee again

\* Owing to an outbreak of small-pox imposing quarantine.

before breakfast, coffee at breakfast, coffee a little after breakfast, and so on till you go to bed, after a cup of coffee."

Waddell learned here, among other things, the art of thatching houses, the knowledge of which he believed would prove invaluable on the Zambesi. "Surely this is not all chance," he writes. "Oh, no, I can see every day that I am being fitted for a nobler work in the regions beyond."

During these months of wandering he met with many strange characters, moral driftwood from the old country, descriptions of whom fill pages of his diary. We may give one illustration. "On Saturday, a pale elderly gentleman, wearing a velvet coat, came up to me, as he stepped from a Boer cart, and said, tapping my shoulder, 'Where do you come from?' 'Scotland,' I said. 'What part of Africa is that?' he said, at which I laughed. Then he said, 'If you come from Scotland, come and have a glass of grog and drink Scotland's health.' When I declined, he said, 'What sort of a Scotchman are you that you cannot have a glass of grog?' On making inquiries, I found he was a Rev. —, a broken-down clergyman of the Church of England, now a tutor in a Boer family." With this poor wreck he had several conversations, the last of which was not without a touch of pathos. "He gave me a knock on the chest, and said, 'You say you are going with Mr. Coillard. Why, you are rotten, you will be a hindrance to him; look at your teeth.' 'But, Mr. —,' I said, 'what does it matter about my teeth if my heart is right?' He paused for a moment, then took my hand and kissed it, saying, 'God be with you, my boy, I wish I were like you.'"

Toward the close of the year the way began to open for the starting of the expedition, and Waddell spent the last weeks in Leribé making boxes, and getting the waggons ready. To the French missionaries, whose warm responsive natures had much in common with his own, he took, from the first, a great liking. "The French missionaries all seem to be good, happy people," he writes, "and are like one large family. To be among them at prayer one feels inclined to say, 'This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.'"

The expedition, as finally arranged, consisted of six Europeans, representing four nationalities and two native evangelists, with their wives and children; Mr. and Miss Coillard, who were French; Mrs. Coillard and Mr. Waddell, who were Scotch; Mr. Jeanmairet, a young Swiss; and Mr. X., an English bricklayer, who was later to desert them to become a trader. These, with the Basutos, Aaron and Levi, formed the whole party. The caravan consisted of four waggons and a Scotch cart, each waggon to be drawn by sixteen oxen under the charge of two Basutos, a leader and a driver, and the cart by eight. A number of spare oxen were also taken, along with seven horses, which Jonathan, the paramount Basuto chief, was sending as presents to Khama and Lewanika. Seven dogs were included for watching and protection against wild beasts.

At last came the starting day, 2nd January, 1884. "We are now ready," writes Waddell, "and the waggons are drawn out on the road. I remarked to Mrs. Coillard, 'It looks as if we were already started.' 'Yes,' she said, 'it is like a ship drawn out of port.'

When saying this she burst into tears, and no wonder, at leaving a place like this, which was a wilderness and now blossoms as the rose."

The actual start was a very touching scene. "What a crowd of people had come to say good-bye! Mr. Coillard had a farewell hymn and prayer after the oxen were all yoked, and when it was over, it was easy to see by the tears of the people how much they loved their missionary. An elderly woman, once the wife of a chief, sat on the front of the waggon, with Mrs. Coillard, till it stopped near the river. When she came down, she caught hold of the wheel and said, 'I cannot let this waggon go.' Mrs. Coillard said to her, 'Rahab, remember what we are going for.' Then she said good-bye for the last time."

A number of the Basuto Christians accompanied them as far as the Caledon River, and helped them to get the waggons across the drift. Then they took a long farewell.

Trying as the expedition was expected to be, no one who set out that day from Leribé had any idea that nearly three years would elapse before the Barotsi Mission could be entered on in earnest. So full of hardship, delay, and difficulty did it prove, that Mrs. Coillard said she thought it would be the second generation that would see the promised land.

No part of Waddell's journal is more full and interesting than his description of the journey northward. Much of it is of course the repetition of similar experiences, the passage of swamps, crossing of rivers, sticking of waggons in mid-stream, with days spent in unloading, loading, and re-loading. Here is one example out of many—the crossing of the Vaal:—







“No. 1 waggon was tried first, with two spans of oxen, and got over all right after a severe tossing. No. 2 stuck in the middle of the stream, and whip and shout as we might, the wheels only sunk deeper in the soft bottom, so there was nothing for it but to off-load. This was no easy matter in mid-stream. We crossed over the cart, put its cargo on the ground, and after several journeys with it to the middle of the stream, carted all the luggage off the waggon to the bank. Then when it was completely empty, every one put his shoulder to the wheel, and with a long pull and a strong pull, and a pull altogether, it came out of the hole, and the oxen drew it safe to land. It was now mid-day, and the cattle as well as ourselves were ready for breakfast.”

The route taken was by way of the Vaal River and Pretoria. In Pretoria a welcome was given them, and a missionary meeting organised, at which Vice-President Joubert took the chair. In an eloquent speech he drew a distinction between “evangelical missionaries, to whom he believed Coillard to belong, and missionaries like *Livingstone*, who mingled Christianity and politics, making trouble among the natives.”\* This was the first missionary meeting ever recognised by a member of a Boer Government.

Leaving Pretoria, the expedition pressed northward to the Limpopo, or Crocodile River (famous as the hunting ground of Gordon Cumming), and followed its banks for a considerable way. The hardships they experienced were innumerable. Food was

\* The Transvaal Boers have always maintained this view of *Livingstone's* work. The controversy was fully dealt with in his own letters, *q.v.*

scarce, their oxen died of red-water, and the stench of rotting vegetation struck them down with sickness. But they pushed bravely forward. The work of each day began with prayer, and the singing of the favourite Sesuto hymn, *Ka linako tsotle* ("I need Thee every hour"). Each fresh difficulty was prayed over, and Waddell testifies that the way in which apparently unsurmountable difficulties seemed to melt away gave him a new faith in the power of prayer. Through all he maintained a cheery spirit, recording the sights and incidents of the way with the zest of the born traveller. The shy antelopes, the garrisons of baboons, the lovely birds with unmelodious screams, one with a cry like "Go away, go away," as if it disliked the appearance of a Scotchman, all find a place in his pages. His majesty, the lion, is about, and fires are kindled at night to keep him at a safe distance; snakes are the accepted order of the day. "After I had lain down for the night, I heard something squeaking at the bottom of my bed, and when I struck a light, was shocked to see a snake killing a frog. I took the frog's part, and killed the snake."

Arrived at the Marico River, a tributary of the Limpopo, they found it so swollen that all thought of crossing was out of the question until it should subside. Three weary weeks they had to spend in this unhealthy spot, with oxen dying every day, and the whole party suffering from fever. Before the end a waggon was left without oxen, every horse had died save one, flocks of vultures kept wheeling over them all day long, and they began to be in deep concern. But the water fell, help arrived from Shoshong, and they continued on their journey.

On the 3rd of April they reached Shoshong (Khama's Town), where a hearty reception awaited them, and they rested through some happy weeks of fellowship, while Waddell busied himself with overhauling the waggons. Khama and his people vied with one another in their kindness. "Khama is a prince and a gentleman," writes Waddell. "He is a philanthropist, and lives for the good of his people, which is an exception to the rule of the native chiefs. He is more afraid of the demon drink than of all the forces of the Matabele." Here Waddell had fresh testimony of the wonderful effects of mission work. The first to preach the Gospel among the Bamangwatoes had been Livingstone, and now the Christian communicants numbered many hundreds, and their church had become too small. "The work here," he says, "is a sure proof of the power of the Gospel."

Mr. Coillard found a letter awaiting him from Lewanika, who had also written to Khama, asking him as a favour to help his missionary on his journey, that he might arrive as soon as possible, and making at the same time some other modest requests, such as "a horse, a plough, a black dog, a rifle, and to crown all, Khama's daughter for his wife," which, says Waddell, "of all things he won't get."

The longest and most trying part of the journey was still to come, and after this period of rest in Shoshong, with the oxen fresh and the waggons once more in repair, the expedition plunged into the thirsty Kalahari desert, to face the 400 miles that still lay between them and the Zambesi. "Crack went the whips and we were off," writes Waddell. "Night was approaching as we entered the desert."

We had now seen the last of civilisation, it might be for life. God knows, we may never all return. When passing through the Mangwato Hills all was still, save the groaning of the waggons, and hearing a leopard growl in the distance, a strange feeling of loneliness crept over me as I thought of home, and those I might never see again."

Their way now led through heavy sand, thick thorny bushes and entangling trees, sometimes for days without sight of water, and the sufferings of man and beast were great. "Travelling at night suits the cattle best," writes Waddell, "but it is anything but pleasant to travel through a thorny forest in the darkness. Clouds of choking dust arise from the waggons, and every now and then a hat is knocked off with the bushes, or someone's clothes are caught by the *wait-a-bit* thorn. To sit in front of a waggon one runs the risk of becoming like Absalom, to travel behind is even more dangerous, as the waggon goes over very flexible trees, which spring back and give you a blow enough to knock you down. Every now and then one or other of the waggons will run against a tree, which is rather unpleasant to cut down in the moonlight. The few hours we stop during the day are taken up repairing the wreck of the previous night."

This thirsty desert is inhabited by a tribe of bushmen, some of whom the expedition engaged as guides, and Waddell's description of them is full of interest. "These people are surely the lowest of the human race. They have no settled place of abode, their huts do not deserve the name, as they are only a few branches, with some grass thrown over. All

their blanket is a fire, to see them lying round which makes one's flesh creep. Their legs are actually roasted and sometimes bleeding. Those travelling with us always carry a piece of burning wood, by which they can have a fire whenever they rest. Should this wood go out, they have two sticks slung round their necks, and they make fire by friction. It is interesting to travel with them and see how they find food all along the road. Suddenly they will drop their gourd and begin digging roots like potatoes, or they will chop a tree and find honey. They have means of getting water by an artesian well which they have ever with them. If they come upon a low-lying wet place, they will insert a reed three feet long, with some grass tied to the end to serve as a filter. Then they suck the reed, have a drink, fill their water vessels and go on. They wander about all their life long, living on anything they can find, such as roots, bulbs, insects, snakes, beetles, caterpillars, grasshoppers, berries, everything and anything they can chew. They have the instinct to know poisonous plants and fruits, avoid them in eating, but use them to poison their arrows. They can cure themselves, it is said, from snake-bite. They are full of superstition, and carry with them bones which they throw up as dice to find out what direction their luck lies in hunting. They have really no god but the belly, and of all people seem to be the hardest to get at, owing to their unsettled ways. Their language, also, is a difficult one, being a series of clicks. Khama, whose subjects they are, has tried to break them off from their wild, roving ways by making them cattle herds. But many won't tame,



they prefer to feast and fast and rove about, like the rest of the animals of their home."

Not a few travellers have been lost in the Kalahari desert. Mr. Selous, the famous hunter, when pursuing a giraffe, lost his way, and nearly died of hunger. One day Waddell went in search of a donkey and had a similar experience. "I was attracted by a wild pig," he writes, "and rushed after it, hoping to get a shot. At that moment a snake darted across my path chasing a lizard, so I stood and saw the snake run up a tree after its prey into a hole. By this time I had quite forgotten my direction, which it is very easy to do in an African forest, the trees being so like each other. I wandered about for some time; snakes seemed to be crossing my path every five minutes, and one enormous serpent went flying past like lightning, making a noise that resembled a boy playing with a piece of elastic stretched from his mouth. The evening was approaching, and though I knew I could not be far from the waggon road, I could not say in what direction it lay. The thought of being benighted was too much. Observing a little rise in the sand before me, I climbed the tallest tree I could find, and saw the valley where I thought the waggons were. I set off, and before walking an hour heard the barking of our dogs, which was a welcome sound. Nobody ever knew I was lost but myself; I got a fright but said nothing."

Despite its difficulties, Waddell found the crossing of the Kalahari intensely interesting. With his pre-conceived idea of a desert as a drifting sandy waste, its immense forests teeming with zebras, gnus, and



antelopes, as well as ostriches, were a revelation to him. He studied the trees along the route with the practised eye of the worker in wood, and speculated on their possibilities. And he kept the much-trying Basuto drivers in humour with his cheeriness and sympathy. "He is a good fellow," was their verdict to Mrs. Coillard.

Practically the whole road northward Waddell covered on foot, and was far, as he says, from enjoying the immunity of the children of Israel, whose "*raiment waxed not old, neither did their foot swell.*" He was often footsore and weary, as well as in straits about his wardrobe, but he carried through all with a "glorious morning face," rejoicing in the daily miracle of God's providence.

The Kalahari was not all tangled forest. Here and there they would come to wide open plains, where they watched the animals sporting and fighting on the far horizon, and saw the sun set in a heaven that looked, he says, "like a flame of fire, or glittering gold."

## CHAPTER IV

### THE ZAMBESI AT LAST

IN following the steps of Waddell, it is enlivening at times to turn from the plain Scotch homespun of his journal to the vivid tapestry of Coillard's great book, "On the Threshold of Central Africa." The following taken from his description of the crossing of the Kalahari desert, in which we left our friend at the close of last chapter, throws an interesting side-light on Waddell's character:—"Every one has his share of damages, but no one has been so badly used as our friend Waddell. A portmanteau, a trunk, and toolbox comprised all his belongings. The portmanteau and the trunk disappeared one after the other. 'At least my chest of tools has escaped,' said our Scotchman with satisfaction. He was proud of this mahogany chest, with its ingenious compartments, the first work of his apprenticeship. It received many blows and fractures, but our carpenter always found some way of repairing them. One day a new *hiku! hiku!* from Levi made us run breathless to his waggon. The precious chest was no longer; it lay splintered on the ground. This time the damage was irremediable. Poor Waddell used his hatchet with all his might, to disengage the rest of his tools from the trunk of a great tree. As for ourselves, we could

only look on, sorrowful and silent. Waddell's face was flushed, the tears starting to his eyes, yet he tried to smile in spite of it all. 'Never mind, sir,' he said, 'the chest is broken but the tools are saved; give me some boards and time enough, and you'll see if I don't make something better.' There is grit in a man like that. It is easy enough to give him time, but where are the boards to come from? They will have to be made first, and no one knew that better than himself."

Emerging at last from the Kalahari, they arrived at Pandamatenga, at one time considered the nearest place to the Zambesi to which oxen could be brought with safety, on account of the deadly tsetse-fly. They received a warm welcome from Mr. Westbeeche, the well-known trader, who had his head station there, and whom Mr. Coillard had met on his previous journey north. It had been the graves indeed of some hunters and traders in a corner of Mr. Westbeeche's garden, Coillard told Waddell, that decided him to return to the Zambesi. "Surely if these men could risk their lives for the sake of money," he said to himself, "it would be a shame if the servants of God would not risk their lives for the sake of the Gospel." Westbeeche, who was the only trader Lewanika had ever allowed to traffic in his dominions, had the cheering news to give them that all the chiefs were in their favour, and they were being eagerly expected.

In addition to the small colony of hunters, there was in Pandamatenga a Jesuit Mission, the members of which received them with astonishing kindness. Some six years earlier the Jesuits had come up country with dreams of evangelising Barotsiland, and had pene-

trated as far as the Capital, but in face of hardship and death their enthusiasm had ebbed away, and now they had withdrawn themselves to this forlorn hope beyond the river, and seemed chiefly anxious to be recalled home. "Drive me where you will," said the Father Superior to Waddell, as he sat in the front of one of the waggons, "but not to the Zambesi." They took them all over their station, showed them their farm and garden and chapel, regarding the woodwork of which Waddell expressed his admiration. "You are a carpenter, are you," said the Father Superior, "then you are the most useful man in the country?" "They appear to be a people," adds Waddell, "who know how to take care of themselves, but as for teaching the natives little is done." However, they had kind hearts, and with a rare magnanimity loaded with supplies the men who were coming to take their place.

Five days' journeying through a country of sand and thick forest with little water brought them to Leshoma, sixty miles nearer the Zambesi, and only some ten miles from it. As this was now reckoned the nearest place to the river where cattle could live, they resolved to pitch their tents and make a halt, until they got into communication with Lewanika, or his head-men at Sesheke. For to cross the Zambesi without formal permission would be a deadly crime. "Our camp," writes Waddell, "is on the edge of a sand-hill, from which we have a good view of three to four miles across the Leshoma valley, with the Leshoma, a beautiful stream of clear water with a rocky bottom, flowing through it. Looking north, we can see a blue line over the trees, where lies the

valley of the Zambesi." But they were farther from the end of their trials than they fancied.

News of their arrival was sent on to Sesheke, the chief town of the Barotsi, on the Lower River and to Mambova, where lived a chief whom Coillard knew, and they set out on foot to the ford of Kazungula, hoping to be taken across, for an interview. "To us coming out of the thirsty desert," says Waddell, "the river was a lovely sight. We fired two or three shots to attract the ferryman, and then assembled under a large tree, and offered prayer, thanking God for bringing us thus far, and asking Him to be with us still and bless this Mission to the poor benighted people along the bank of this beautiful river. We hardly expected to get across immediately, as we knew that the ferryman dare not take a stranger without permission from a chief. So we wandered about, waiting, and admiring the river, with its islands of palm trees, until the sun went down. At that moment we saw two natives steal across the river, from our side, having hidden apparently in fright lest we should give them a message. Darkness overtook us, and there was no sight of the ferryman; so we lay down and passed an uncomfortable night amid the concert of an African forest, with the additional bass of the hippopotamus. As soon as daylight broke, we had some breakfast, then a word of prayer, and set off for the camp at Leshoma, assured that no welcome was to come to us." Coillard had omitted to accompany his message with the *salutation* which the chiefs expected. For the same reason his letters which he had despatched ahead had not been forwarded to the King.

It became clear to them that they would have to

put up the expedition at Leshoma until the rainy season was over, and send their Basuto drivers back to their country. A message, however, reached Coillard soon after that he was wanted by the chiefs at Sesheke, and he resolved to set out alone, advising Waddell, at the same time, to make a visit to the Victoria Falls some sixty miles off, as it might be his only opportunity of seeing them. So the next section of his journal is filled with an account of that memorable visit. As it was made in the early days before *Musi oa Tunya* (The Thundering Smoke) had become democratised, we shall quote his description.

“Coming upon the river the second day, an extensive view opened before us, and the grandeur of the panorama is impossible to relate. We marched in single file, as if going through some wonderful botanical garden. Trees with tropical creepers like long ropes intertwining them, palms and flowers, and tall grass, at places eaten close to the ground by the wild animals, which every now and then start and flee from us. The trees are full of monkeys, baboons, and beautiful birds. On the ground are flocks of guinea-fowls, pheasants, and such like, some of which I shot, and a python ten feet long. One has to keep a good lookout for the old game pits, which are overgrown with creepers and bushes. These traps are found all along the south bank, and belong to the people across the river. We came across many skeletons of elephants, their enormous skulls looking like big white stones at a distance. In one of them I found a young hive of bees. Those elephants that are left have become very timid, and keep away from the river during the day. We had the usual forest concert at

night, the lion included, but he did not show himself. One day, to my astonishment, our Zambesi boys were attracted by a little bird called the honey-bird. This little bird chirped, and the boys followed it from tree to tree, until they came to a hollow one where the honey was. There the little bird rested silent, while the boys made fire, chopped a hole and got the honey. Then the bird flew down and gleaned upon the leavings of honey and grub.

“Arriving at the Falls, we rid ourselves of some clothing, put on our waterproofs, and got a grand view of this wonder of the world. We got right in front of the Falls, which are five in number, the river being about a mile in width, and divided by four or five islands. The water, falling a distance of three to four hundred feet into a narrow channel, causes five volumes of spray to ascend a great height and fall back like a perpetual rain, creating a most beautiful rainbow. Tropical trees adorn the islands, and numbers of rare ferns grow on the crevices of the rocks and roots of the trees, which are ever wet with the falling spray. I understand that Dr. Livingstone cut his name on a tree on one of the islands overlooking the Falls, but as far as I am aware, no one has ever ventured to look for it.”

Immediately on his return from the Falls, Waddell set to work to build for Mr. and Mrs. Coillard a log-cabin, which might later serve as a depôt for goods coming from Shoshong. He hired some native boys to assist, among them Nguana-Ngombé, of whom we shall hear later, and went with them into the forest to fell trees. His methods of work excited the wonder of the natives. Why should he wish to make a

*square* house, ought not a house to be *round*, as the sun was round, and the moon? And how was his house to stand? "After having squared the trees for the foundation," he writes, "I had them levelled in their place and raised the poles on them. This was something new to the natives, who were puzzled to know how the house would stand, with the trees not planted in the ground. They said it would fall, and wanted to show me how to do it. When I had the roof on and the stays taken away, they said we white people were wizards, as we could make houses stand on trees, instead of planting them in the ground. When asked if it was good they said, 'Oh, yes, but they could have made a house with less trees, and if I had planted them in the ground it would have been finished long ago. Besides, they thought the house would be too cold, being so high.'"

Waddell showed from the first a wonderful aptitude in dealing with the natives. He had infinite patience, and he needed it. One day he made a hand-barrow out of a box, and set two of them to carry loads of earth; but they could not understand it. They put a little earth in the bottom, one put it on his head, and the other walked behind to help him off with it. So he had to allow them to return to their own ways. He tried to teach them to handle a trowel, but found it impossible. They said they wanted the medicine. "Poor people," he says, "they think all our skill and wisdom comes to us by taking medicine." Here already Waddell began to have a foretaste of his future work and of its difficulties. The problem of making planks with a hand-saw faced him from the first. "Poor Waddell," writes Coillard, "has been



racking his brain to try and make planks a foot wide with a saw designed for quite a different purpose." Again and again this trouble meets us in his journal. "Sawing timber is very hard work, and nobody seems to like it. If only we had a circular saw, what a resource it would be!" It was long, too long, before that wish was fulfilled.

When Coillard returned from his visit to the chiefs at Sesheke, it was with the disturbing news that a revolution had broken out in the country—Lewanika had fled, and it was doubtful when they would be at liberty to cross the Zambesi. So they were compelled in the meantime to make Leshoma their home, and begin what mission work was possible. Miss Coillard opened a school, and Mr. Jeanmairret went around teaching and preaching. Here they had to endure thirteen months of dreary waiting, during which their lives and property were in continual danger. Hordes of natives besieged them, bartering, stealing, and threatening. Leopards broke through their defences and killed their animals. Fever struck them down; but they fought on to secure a footing in the place. Writing in the month of November, Waddell says: "In the first week of this month we dined for the first time in our house, a great treat after nearly a year of camp life. God has been good to us, and kept us through the wilderness until now, and has given me strength to get this house and other shelters ready for His servants before the great rains."

He had the greatest difficulty in obtaining any help or information in regard to "woods" or other things, and was thrown entirely on the resources of his own eyes and hands, both of which he used to advantage.

His diary overflows with a wealth of observation; of trees, plants, and minerals, birds, animals, and even insects, he made a close study. Nothing in God's world was indifferent to him. He observes the habits of the insects moving through the dust, "making it like a miniature Vesuvius"; he describes the flight of the ants, leaving their wings strewn over the ground in the morning "like flakes of snow"; he follows the movements of the caterpillars and beetles, taking a special interest in the "black scavenger" as he rolls off a ball of dung, larger than himself, to his hole. The beauty of the Spring blossoms, the creepers, and flowering shrubs, the hum of the honey-bees in the trees, the lovely but songless birds, all have their place in his journal. He marvels at the lack of interest which the natives display in everything that does not concern their stomachs. "The working boys," he writes, "seem to care for nothing but what they can eat. When inquiring about a beautiful white flower, like a lily, all the answer I got was, 'it is not for eating.'"

One gets glimpses also of the hardships and risks of his life. "I have no mosquito curtain," he writes, "but sleep with gloves on, and cover my face as much as I can in the stifling heat, but awake in the morning to find my pillow all spotted with blood." One day a grey-coloured snake, about six feet long, spat over his shoulder. Another day he fell ten feet from the roof of the house which he was building. Once, when he had followed some natives to their shelter, to demand the return of a stolen chisel, he heard one inciting the others to choke that *moruti nyana* (little teacher). He suffered much from fever, and often

could hardly drag himself to work. "Mr. Coillard has been thinking he will have to bury me," he writes. One day he had to struggle from his bed in the height of fever to make a coffin for the little girl of Aaron, one of the Basuto evangelists. With the thermometer rising to 112 degrees in the shade, work at all times was difficult, and with a fever-stricken body it was martyrdom. And the night often brought little rest. "Between dogs, hyænas, and leopards, the noise at night is sometimes unbearable, especially to one with a splitting headache, and the mosquitoes on those nights seem to be more savage than ever, making one long for the morning, which brings relief but no strength for the duties of the day. I struggle on however, and though I do not make much speed I am thankful when I am on my feet."

Having built huts for the rest of the party, and made them comfortable, he proceeded to repair the waggons, and make doors and windows for their first home on the Zambesi, when that happy dream should be realised. "Miss Coillard holds her little school at one end of the shed, and my bench is at the other, where I am now making a hard-wood door to take to Barotsiland."

All this time Coillard was going and coming between Leshoma and Sesheke, that "Slough of Despond," as he called it, holding meetings with the chiefs. Sesheke was the residence of twelve or fifteen Barotsi chiefs, presided over by a principal chief called the Morantsiane. Being far removed from the capital, they had usurped a considerable degree of power, and had incurred the suspicion of the king, who was scheming to have most of them removed,

when his intention was discovered. Now they could not conceal their delight at his downfall, and gave themselves over to an orgy of drunkenness. Confusion reigned supreme. It was impossible for Coillard to enter the country until he first paid his respects to the king, and for the present there was no king. So the weary months dragged on. He gathered the idle chiefs together and attempted to do some mission work. A report reached Leshoma, which had rather an amusing sequel, that the people at Sesheke had become accustomed to *die every morning* (so they expressed kneeling at prayer), and now they thought nothing of it. Some young men, Waddell tells us, who had come early to sell corn, were invited to morning prayers with the other natives. "They sat still during the singing and reading, but when we were getting on our knees for prayer, they all bolted and ran down the valley as hard as their legs could carry them, and when we got up, we could see them still running. When we inquired afterwards why they had run away, they said they heard it was *death*. How they have come to associate prayer with death we do not know."

At last a lull came in the revolution, a weakling, Akufuna, was set on the throne of Lewanika by the insurrectionists, and things showed promise of settling down. Coillard made a journey to the capital, Lealui, which he found in ruins. He was well received by the new king, to whom he gave the *salutation* that had been intended for Lewanika—a handsome military cloak—and was taken to inspect the site that was designated for his mission. He returned down the river, having decided to leave Mr. Jeanmairat at

Sesheke, and push on at once with Waddell to Sefula, 350 miles higher up the Zambesi, and within twenty miles of the Capital, where he would plant his central station. On his arrival at Leshoma, he found the whole party prostrate with fever, and was horrified, he said, at the cadaverous faces he saw. It might be thought that now they were at liberty to cross the Zambesi, but no, the "lords of Sesheke" must first pay their respects to the king, and this occupied some months longer. But "the weariest river flows somewhere into the sea," and at last they returned, offered their assistance at the Ford, and expressed a wish that one of the missionaries might remain amongst them at Sesheke.

Now came the hazardous task of crossing the Zambesi, but it was with happy and buoyant hearts they left Leshoma at last behind, and prepared to face it. The ten miles of forest were passed during the night to escape the tsetse-fly, which is chiefly active by day; and on the 15th August, 1885, the expedition stood at the Ford of Kazungula, looking across the stretch of waters over which waggons and live-stock had to be ferried. It was the work of many days to get all the goods across, the natives whom the chiefs of Sesheke had sent to help, more eager for *setsibas* (calico) than for service, gave them much annoyance, but the fresh enthusiasm which filled the party carried them through. They felt that the work for which they had come was to begin at last. And by 24th August they had encamped on the other side. One incident from Waddell's journal will give some idea of the perilous nature of the crossing. "Some one suggested to ferry the waggon-wheels across by standing them upright in two canoes alongside each

other. So we tried the cart wheels first, and I went over with them. All went well at first, but when in mid-stream some bark came out of a hole in the bottom of the canoe, which the paddler immediately stopped with his toe. Taking my eye off him for a moment, I noticed that the pin had come out of one end of the axle, and that the canoes were separating, and the axle was nearly out of the bush. I saw the danger and shouted out, and one of the men gave me over his paddle, so we pulled the canoes together and held on until we landed. What would have happened if the axle had come out makes me shudder to think, for it means that both canoes would have been capsized by the heavy fall of the wheels. I thank God for this deliverance from the crocodiles. We had enough of that way of crossing."

A glimpse we have of Waddell returning from Leshoma, whither he had gone to fetch some forgotten articles, shows us the state of body in which this exhausting labour was done. "Having a bad attack of fever, I started to walk the ten miles back at my leisure, leaving Kamburu (a native boy) to follow when he had made up his bundles. When I had gone about four miles, I was so done up that I lay down under a tree. Kamburu, coming up, looked distressed and said, '*Ntate* (Father), can you not walk?' 'Oh, Kamburu,' I said, 'could you not get me a drink?' And immediately he put down his load and ran back to Leshoma. I think I never had such a thirst, and Kamburu seemed never to come. So I got on my feet, and again made an effort to walk on, but found to my astonishment, when I met Mr. Coillard, that I was going back to Leshoma. Mr. Coillard

proposed that the boys should carry me, but I would not hear of it, and gathered all my courage and strength and trudged on, taking a rest every two or three miles. Kamburu did not appear until we had nearly arrived at the Ford."

When their troubles at the Ford were over, some of them went for a row on the river. "As we were rowing past the islands," says Waddell, "we sang the Mission hymn, 'From Greenland's icy mountains,' and the words, 'From many an ancient river, from many a palmy plain,' seemed to come home with double force, to stimulate us with renewed zeal for our work of delivering the heathen from error's chain."

Another toilsome month was spent in covering the sixty miles between Kazungula and Sesheke, as the road had first to be opened up. Part of the way led through a steaming marshy plain in which roamed thousands of animals, from the buffalo to the smallest antelope, and part through a tsetse-infested forest, abounding in lions, one of which killed a donkey, within a hundred feet of where Waddell was sleeping under a waggon. But Sesheke was reached in safety, and on the 24th September, 1885, a year and nine months after their departure from Leribé, the first Mission station was formally opened on the Zambesi. Within another month Coillard and Waddell hoped to be on their way to the Upper Valley, in order to reach Sefula before the rainy season, but another cause of delay was at hand.



## CHAPTER V

### PIONEERING AMONG THE BAROTSI

SOMETHING must now be said of the Land and People to which this Pioneer Mission had come. The country of the Barotsi is an immense tract, nearly as large as the German Empire, stretching for 300 miles along both sides of the Zambesi. It is for the most part a dried-up lake, little better than a swamp, and reeks with malaria. Four months every year the Valley is flooded to the depth of five to eight feet, by the rise of the Zambesi, from the rains in the higher reaches of the river, and the natives betake themselves to mounds and low hills, where they cultivate their gardens. But as soon as the water subsides, they return to the evil-smelling swamps they love. "They are crocodiles," said their king of them.

At the time Waddell came to the country, the Barotsi nation consisted of some twenty tribes, Matolelas, Batokas, Mangete, &c., all living in a state of slavery to the Barotsi tribe, whose chief seat was in the Upper Valley. They could call nothing, not even their wives and children their own, and were constantly liable to have them taken from them. The social fabric was a highly organised system in which each tribe, and each member of a tribe, had his assigned place, but all existed for the benefit of the



paramount tribe, who, as the only freemen, were the aristocrats and tyrants of the land, and lived from the labours and the tribute of the lower tribes. The Barotsi were all chiefs of different degrees, and the government was in their hands. This system still continues to a large extent, although in July, 1906, the slaves were legally emancipated.

The first man to visit the Valley was Dr. Livingstone, whose coming in 1850 made a deep impression. Endless stories, many of them legendary, are told about the marvellous doctor. He could light gun-powder on a man's hand by means of a little glass; he could bring up all the nations of the earth, and make them pass through a little hole before their eyes. The people who travelled with him always ended by saying, "*Ngaka* (the doctor)—ah! he was not a man like any other, he was a god."

When Livingstone passed through the Valley, the Barotsi were vassals to a Basuto tribe, the Makololo, who had imposed their language on the country and otherwise strongly influenced it. Sebitoane, a Makololo warrior, whose chieftainship had been disputed in his own country, had fought his way north to the Zambesi, and established himself there some thirty years previously. It was at a time when the Barotsi, who are not a warrior nation, but prefer to attain their ends by other means, were being sorely pressed by the fighting Matabele. They invited the protection of Sebitoane and his warriors, who settled down amongst them, and the Barotsi became their servants. Sebitoane was a wise ruler as well as a warrior, and the land prospered under his sway.

He greatly impressed Livingstone, and gave him a

parting request to send missionaries to his country. When Livingstone returned home he told of the interesting people he had found, and urged that they should be evangelised. Great enthusiasm was evoked, a large sum of money collected, and in 1859 an expedition started, under the charge of Messrs. Helmore and Price. But in the interval Sebitoane died, and his son, Sekeletu became a traitor. The expedition was robbed, and all the members died, some say by poison, except Mr. Price, who escaped with two of Mr. Helmore's children.

On his return to the Zambesi Livingstone spoke with great indignation. "You have killed and plundered the servants of God whom you invited to your country, and the judgment of God will fall on you." The prophecy was speedily fulfilled. On the death of Sekeletu in 1866 a quarrel ensued over the succession, the Barotsi of the Upper Valley took advantage of it and massacred the Makololo to a man. To this day Livingstone's prophecy is often quoted, and the Christians among the Bechuanas and Bamangwatoes put the question, "Where are now the powerful Makololo; has not God avenged the death of His servants?"

Things did not go so well with the Barotsi after the destruction of their protectors, for if the Makololo had chastised them with whips, the Barotsi chief, Sepopa, who now became king, chastised them with scorpions. It was said that the crocodiles at Sesheke became fat with feeding on his wives and others whom he threw into the river. Another revolution brought about his death; the next king met the same end, and then Lewanika marched through bloodshed to the throne.

He pursued the same bloodthirsty policy as his predecessors, putting to death all enemies and possible rivals, and for years lived in constant dread of being bewitched or killed.

At the time Coillard entered Barotsiland, Lewanika was in exile, and Akufuna, the puppet of the revolutionists, on the throne, but hardly had they settled in Sesheke when the news arrived that Lewanika had reappeared, fighting his way back to power, Akufuna had fled, and the whole country was again thrown into a ferment. The chiefs in Sesheke scattered, the supporters of Akufuna, including the Morantsiane, taking to the forest, and the friends of Lewanika, ensconcing themselves on an island. The place was deserted, and terror stalked through the land. In such circumstances mission work was practically impossible. The minds of the people were too distracted with war to give any heed to a gospel of peace and good-will. Coillard decided therefore to abandon his intention for the present of going higher up the Valley, and to remain in Sesheke and wait events.

The first days of the missionaries at Sesheke were trying and dangerous in the extreme. They had fightings without and fears within. A state of anarchy prevailed. As there was no king, each man did what seemed right in his own eyes. Drinking went on day and night. Sometimes drunken chiefs would force their way into the Mission and refuse to go. The missionaries were robbed on every hand. "While the country is without any authorised government," writes Waddell, "the thieves take advantage of the situation. They steal everything whether it is of value or not. Tools, clothes, sheep, chickens, oxen, everything

disappears. Slaves steal for their masters. Our very workmen help their friends who come about."

Then they suffered no less from wild beasts. "As the village is deserted, it has become the haunt of leopards and hyænas. The hyænas have become so bold, and come so near, that they run against our tent ropes. The crocodiles have carried away our pigs, dogs, and goats. They are so thick in the river that animals and people alike are sure to be caught if they stand for a moment at the edge of the water. The other day a woman was caught by the leg; she held on by a tree and the crocodile went off with her leg." Waddell himself had a narrow escape from a crocodile which he came upon suddenly, as it lay basking on the river-bank. Fortunately he startled it, but "of the two," he says, "I think I got the bigger fright."

Notwithstanding the troubles, he proceeded in the best of spirits to the clearing of the station and the building of mission-houses, going into the forest with native boys and hewing down trees. "It is interesting to go with the natives into the forest," he writes. "What amuses me most is the use they find for bark. It is not only used for medicine; they make use of it for many primitive, domestic articles. They are never at a loss for a dish in which to put the honey they find. As trees with knobs are plentiful, they chop a piece of bark off at a knob, and at once they have a hollow dish. If they are caught in a storm, they chop off a large piece of bark and protect their thick, woolly hair with a newly-made umbrella. This same kind of bark is bent round like a flexible plank, another piece is used for a bottom, holes are pierced through with an assegai, and sewn together with cords of inner

bark, and a basket for carrying corn is made with handle complete in a few minutes."

An event that brightened the first weeks was the prospective marriage of Mr. Jeanmairet, who had, in the meantime, become engaged to one of the party, Elise Coillard, niece of Mr. Coillard. As Seseke was to be their home, Waddell set himself with zest to help Jeanmairet to erect a suitable house to which to bring his bride. The home was not ready when the wedding day arrived, but it passed off with great *éclat*. A waggon-sail was thrown across the rafters of the unfinished house, the rough walls decorated with palms and creepers, and here, in the presence of the Morantsiane and a company of native guests, who had ventured to appear, the ceremony was performed. The bride wore a white muslin dress of her own making, and carried a bouquet of wild-flowers. There were no bridesmaids, for Mrs. Coillard was the only European lady in the country. After the service they retired to a tent, where the dinner was served and the bride cut up the wedding cake, baked by her own hands. It was the first Christian marriage in the land, and Coillard wished to make it as instructive as possible for the natives. But so little conception had they of conjugal love that he had to explain to them what a marriage meant. In the evening a magic-lantern entertainment was given, which sent them into fits of laughter when they recognised any familiar objects on the screen. But still greater was the effect produced by the letting off of some fireworks, which recalled to many the wonderful tales of Livingstone. "It is the gun of *Molimo*"\* (God), cried one, as he saw a rocket flying in the direction of the

adherents of the opposite party, "and it will kill them on the island." So the happy day went past, and the young married couple took up their abode in a round hut until their house should be ready.

Waddell next gives us a picture of his own home surroundings. "In my square hut of ten feet by ten I have put up a bench. My bed is on the one side and my bench is on the other. It is not very bedroom-like, with the floor all covered with shavings, but I get it cleared out for the Day of Rest. My bench makes a good writing-table, which is a great luxury to me, after having written all my letters on my knees since leaving Leribé. So with a box for a seat, and bench for a desk, I am as comfortably seated as the clerk of state."

The natives were greatly interested in his work, which was far more attractive to them than the preaching of Coillard. "The windows especially are a great amusement to the natives," he writes, "as they can see themselves. Such a thing as a mirror they have never seen before. They go into fits of laughter when they see their own mouth and eyes for the first time, and it is a great wonder to them to see the river and trees in the house when they are at their back."

But he was not merely content to work with his hands. In spare hours in the evening he would take the native boys into his hut and seek to teach them. "Although I feel tired after my day's work at the bench," he writes, "yet this draws me closer to the boys, and unconsciously they are teaching me Sekololo, while I teach the letters and syllables. So the hour is a very pleasant one." Mr. Coillard and the other missionaries had the advantage of knowing

from the first the language principally spoken, which is the same as that of Basutoland (Sesuto), an advantage that prevented many misunderstandings and probably saved their lives in those early days of peril, but Waddell had slowly to acquire it through daily intercourse. In those days also he began to realise the full difficulty of mission work. At home he had loved to sing, as he reminds his mother in a letter we have referred to—

“Go sound the trump on every shore,  
And bid the heathen weep no more.”

But face to face with hard fact, he found that the heathen was not weeping, and had little desire for the Gospel beyond the material advantages of education and progress which it might bring.

“Some Sundays we have congregations of from two to three hundred under the tree at the station,” he writes, “and if Mr. Coillard’s sermons were not attractive, he could hardly get them to sit. Many people think that all a missionary has to do is to preach to people anxious to hear and to believe. But it is quite the opposite, for one of the hardest tasks is to get their attention. An ox, dog, or bird will distract their minds, and, if perchance, a stranger pass by, one and another will get up to salute him. Then at the end of the service they will say, ‘We have listened well, now give us a handkerchief or a cloth.’ Sometimes I think Mr. Coillard’s words reach the hearts of some of the old chiefs. He never flinches to tell them they are the worst liars and murderers he has come across, and at times I see them putting their heads between their



knees, as if the truth was cutting them to the quick. But it is difficult to arouse their dead consciences."

No mission field has proved more hard and unyielding than this, whose opening up we are following in our story. Born optimist though he was, Coillard once wrote: "I confess that I am sometimes stupefied when I see the aspect under which the Barotsi display human nature. Hitherto I have witnessed nothing like it." Even now, after nearly twenty-five years, and the sacrifice of many lives, the foundations of the Church are only being laid. It has produced some noble characters, and bids the missionaries not despair, but the moral life of the people remains a sink of corruption which cannot bear description. They possess all the savage traits and superstitions of the Matabele, and are far more treacherous. Clever with their hands beyond most native races in all kinds of craftsmanship, and smooth and plausible of tongue, they are at the very bottom of the moral scale. "As for morals," writes Waddell, "the Barotsi have none. They have no *home* as we understand the word. An old man will throw away the wife of his youth to make room for a younger. Many of their cruelties are too awful to relate. If children are in any way deformed or weak, they think nothing of throwing them into the river. If a baby cuts its upper teeth first, it is reckoned bewitched and thrown to the crocodiles."

It seemed impossible to awaken any response of love or gratitude. "They will do nothing for nothing," he writes, "and as little as they can for the value of sixpence. In Basutoland native boys are



fond of doing little messages for the Mission ladies, but here they are very independent. When Mrs. Coillard asked one to go to the river to fetch some water, his answer was, 'What will you give me?' They even sent our boat adrift, and demanded money for bringing it back again." "We can see daily," he adds, "that we have come to a hard field. It looks as if we shall have to work for years digging out the weeds and preparing the soil, before it will be fit to receive the good seed."

While the counter-revolution lasted, the station became neutral ground, and the chiefs of rival parties would meet and sit together, joking, and taking snuff, like the best of friends, but at nightfall they would seize their arms and flee in opposite directions. So the missionaries came to see a good deal of what was going on. Not many months after the Mission was opened, Lewanika won his way back to power, carried out a systematic and ruthless massacre of all his enemies, including the hostile chiefs at Sesheke, and the country began to quieten down. He sent an urgent message to Coillard to visit him at his capital, Lealui, 380 miles up the Zambesi. This was easier said than done, for it was a journey by river, past many rapids, and through a land of assassins. But taking his life in his hand, he started off, travelling by canoe with the chief who had carried out the Sesheke massacres, and arrived in safety at the King's Village (March, 1886). Lewanika having taken the measure of his man, showed him every kindness, and consulted with him regarding the founding of a station at Sefula. As Lealui, his present capital, had become devastated during the recent

disturbance, he promised to remove the King's Village to Sefula, a promise which, like many another, he never carried out. Coillard was impressed by the friendliness of the king, although he had learned by experience to lay small stress on the fair words of a Morotsi.\*

The king's sister and co-ruler, Queen Mokwaë, more a monster than a woman, whose hands were dyed with human blood, impressed him far less favourably. After a visit of some duration, he returned to Sesheke, promising to move to Sefula as soon as practicable. The Zambesi having risen, however, it was out of the question to think of it until the beginning of the next year at least.

Meantime Waddell went on with his labours in securing a comfortable station at Sesheke. Day after day he went into the woods with his native boys, searching for timber, and began to gain that remarkable influence over them for which he was noted. One incident will illustrate the way in which he drew out their affections. Overcome by weariness one day in the forest, he lay down on the ground and fell fast asleep. When he awoke he found that the boys had collected branches and formed them in a bower over his head to protect him from the rays of the mid-day sun. Love wins love even on the Zambesi.

His fine marksmanship also won their unbounded admiration. One incident especially, which surprised himself no less than them, gained him the fame of being a wizard. In shooting an ox, the bullet passed right through the beast's forehead, struck a tree

\* Mo-rotsi, singular of Ba-rotsi; language, Se-rotsi. So Mo-suto, Ba-suto, Se-suto.

behind, and rebounded, falling at his feet. He knelt down, picked up the bullet, and put it in his pocket. The story passed from lip to lip as a marvel worthy of Livingstone. "He shot the ox right on the forehead," the natives would say, "*called the bullet back,* and put it in his pocket." "They little know," says Waddell, "the fright I got when I saw it strike the ground and throw up the sand, and if ever I shoot another ox, I shall see that there are no trees behind."

His life was full of daily risks and adventures, but he seems hardly to have known what fear was. One can well understand the charm this had for the natives who love above all a brave man. He records the riskiest of experiences in the most careless and light-hearted fashion. "The other night, when leaving the dining-room to retire to my cabin, I heard a strange noise close to the door, and on striking a light I saw a large puff-adder charging the cat. A stick not being at hand, I shot it by holding the light in my hand, along with the gun."

But of all the trials of the country, the most trying seems to be an invasion of *soldier-ants*. The following quotation will close our account of the life at Sesheke:—"As the river is now rising, the dark red soldier-ants are shifting their quarters to higher ground. Of all the insects I know, they are the most terrible, especially when they invade and attack, as they did the other night. I was asleep when the attack came, and in agony I left my hut, took refuge by the boys' fire at the cattle kraal, rid myself of those in my hair, and sat till they had left my cabin. The next morning the talk was all of the invasion. Mr. and Mrs. Jeanmairret had sat several hours on the

table waiting their march past, while Mr. Coillard in his house had killed a tiny snake, and was amused to see the ants drag it off. They are very interesting and quite a study, but to us their absence is good company, for after one visit we have quite enough. It is marvellous how smart they are, and how they get a piece of meat suspended from the roof. They make all manner of ropes and ladders by hanging on to each other, and many are sacrificed for the general good. In the morning they can be traced for half a mile in proper marching order, carrying all kinds of caterpillars and white ants. One or two of our fowls sitting on eggs were attacked. They sat still until it was too late, and succumbed to the *soldiers*, which covered them, getting into their eyes and other tender parts. I have heard that one of the tortures inflicted here on a man condemned for witchcraft is to tie him near a nest of those ants. A more painful death could hardly be conceived."

In August, 1886, nearly a year after their arrival at Sesheke, the start was made for Sefula, and two months were occupied in covering the 350 miles. It was a long and wearisome journey through sand, forest, bog, lake, and river. It was the first time that waggons had gone that way, and much of the road had to be cut. All the old toils of loading and off-loading were gone through again. Waggons overturned in passing through rivers, the raw savages hired, unaccustomed to so exhausting labour, threatened to mutiny, and Coillard and Waddell required all their faith and courage to carry the journey through. Here is a glimpse from one of Coillard's letters: "It was three in the afternoon,

Waddell looked as white as a sheet; he staggered, and I thought he was going to faint. I then remembered that we had had nothing to eat since the evening before." A large part of the road along the Loanjé River had to be covered by night on account of the tsetse, the oxen being driven on to islands by day, which, strangely, are free from its ravages. Waddell's description of this insect, so fatal to cattle in those forest belts, where it prevails, is interesting. "At the village of Kalangu, situated in the middle of the fly belt, we had an opportunity of examining those wonderful insects. Though they alighted on our coats, we found them difficult to catch. Their bite, though it smarts, is not worse than the green-headed flies, and one wonders that they are so fatal to cattle. They much resemble a house-fly, being very little larger. They have crossed wings that extend over the body, which is similar in colour to a honey bee, with yellowish cross bars and stripes. The natives say they follow the buffalo and breed in its dung. If such is the case, they may die out with the buffalo."

On the 29th of September, while they were encamped for the Sunday, a beautiful eclipse of the sun was witnessed which caused no little fright among the natives. "Yo! we are all dead men," they cried. At last, on the 11th of October, Sefula was reached. "On getting up the sand-hill," says Waddell, "we out-spanned the oxen, very thankful that our long and wearisome journey had come to an end, and after nearly three years of wandering, we had at last reached the promised land of Barotsi."

They had little more than settled down, when

Lewanika appeared to bring his greetings to the missionaries. "On the following day his majesty came on horseback to see us, and before his arrival we could hear his praises raised by the people re-echo through the forest. On arriving, we greeted him in European fashion by shaking hands, and while Mr. Coillard gave him a chair, our Sesheke people kept carefully moving forward, clapping hands and shouting '*Taii-tôna*' ('great lion') until they assembled in a row, when they put up their hands and shouted three times, '*Yoshô*,' the royal salutation. Then they knelt and rubbed each cheek in the sand. The clapping of hands only ceased for a second, while they spread before his majesty their offering of skins. All the time his majesty took no notice of the palaver, being more taken up with our turkey-cock, which had also come to salute in turkey fashion. Being roused by the commotion, he appeared quite indignant, and when all was quiet he sailed past his majesty with an independent air, and much pomp and pride, perhaps thinking, like Lewanika, there was not his equal in all the world. His majesty being interested in turkeys, we took him to the court and showed him our fowls. Then he had a look at the interior of Mr. Coillard's waggon. He made himself generally agreeable, and looked quite a gentleman in his grey suit."

## CHAPTER VI

### ARDUOUS YEARS AT SEFULA

WADDELL was not long in getting a taste of the life that was awaiting him in Sefula. Weary with the commotion of the king's visit he lay down to sleep in a shelter of branches, which he had made to screen his head from the wind, but was roused by the cry of a fowl, as if caught by a thief. On going to the cart he could see nothing, and returned to his shelter. He had hardly lain down when the cry was repeated, and this went on two or three times in succession, with about ten minutes between each cry. "Then I lost patience," he writes, "took up my bed in the moonlight, and made it down beside the cart, and was no sooner laid down than I saw a leopard come crouching to the cart, and while it was smacking its lips, and preparing to spring at another, I fired and shot it in the side. Then the natives turned out, and in their savage way each threw an assegai at the brute, much to my annoyance, as they completely perforated the beautiful skin. And they made such a noise discussing their bravery, that I felt as if I was entirely out of it."

The first days were spent in erecting temporary kraals to secure the animals against attack from the hyænas and leopards which roamed in numbers even

by day, in sight of the station, and then Waddell had leisure to survey his new surroundings. Sefula, which was to be his home for the next six years, is a valley, from two or three hundred yards to a mile in breadth, opening into the Barotsi Valley on the west, with the Sefula stream flowing through it to the Zambesi, and forming a marsh, in the jungle of which leopards, snakes, and all manner of loathsome creatures abound. The valley is dotted over with native villages, inhabited for the most part by lower tribes, chiefly Ma-Mbundas and Mangete, with here and there a village of Barotsi aristocrats. During the annual inundation it is flooded, and the people living on mounds communicate with each other and with the Capital by canoe. But even in the dry season the soil is so wet and spongy, that a walking-stick can be pushed down with ease, and a hot, unhealthy steam rises every day from the ground. The spot which Coillard had chosen for his station was comparatively healthy, on the top of a wooded sand-hill, seventy feet above the stream, and commanded a wide view of the whole Zambesi valley. "Standing on the brow of Sefula hill," writes Waddell, "one gets a good view of the extent of the Barotsi Valley, which is a dreary sight; the vast plain of withered grass being only broken by a few *motata* (india-rubber) trees, that have been planted on the mounds to indicate the graves of Barotsi chiefs. We can see the valley up and down for miles and right across to the other side, some thirty miles distant. The Zambesi, though flowing through it, cannot be seen, as the water is too low, but I am told that during the inundation a stranger could not tell the channel of the river, as the valley



is then a perfect lake. But unless in deep places, the long grass waves on the surface of the water. The people live in wretched huts, built on the peaty ground, surrounded by their gardens, in which they cultivate millet, mealies, pumpkins, and manioc."

At the time they arrived in the Valley, the fields lay uncultivated, and the people were starving. The whole country bore evidence of the recent warfare. The bones of the slain lay scattered over the valley, after having been picked by the jackals and leopards, and then by the fish during the inundation. "In such conditions," says Waddell, "in a tropical country, no one would dispute the unhealthiness of this valley. But the Barotsi are fond of it, not only from a military point of view, but also for its agricultural products and its pasture, which supplies the cattle all the year round except for the three months of the inundation, when they are driven to the high-lands."

Every step bore trace of the low moral condition of the people among whom he had come. "The meaning of Sefula I cannot say," he writes, "but it is nothing short of a Golgotha, skulls and bones of unfortunate wretches, recently burned for witchcraft, are strewn up and down." Waddell was under no delusion as to the nature of the task they were come to face. "The minds and hearts of those people are so dead and dormant, that they are like the wild brushwood that has been growing around for aught we know, from the very creation, multiplying year by year, and sending its long roots farther into the ground. Attempting to plough through such roots would be the height of madness and folly. Many pick-axes will probably be broken and destroyed ere the plough can

turn the fallow ground." He himself was to become one of those broken pick-axes that would prepare for the coming of the plough.

He had now to face the gigantic task of building a whole mission station, houses, church, &c., in one of the deadliest climates of the world. Every plank he used had to be cut from the native trunk with a hand-saw. Add to this, the daily battle with hyænas, leopards, and snakes, and the more or less constant fight with fever, and we have some idea of the enormous difficulties he had to encounter.

His first work, after some temporary native huts had been erected, was to build a house for Mr. and Mrs. Coillard. Mrs. Coillard had been left behind at Sesheke, and as soon as Coillard had seen his party settled, he returned to fetch her, and also Aaron, one of the Basuto evangelists, who was to assist him at Sefula, the other remaining in Sesheke. "God bless you, and make you strong," were his parting words to Waddell, and they cheered him on during the lonely days of separation. His only companion was X., whose indolence and strangeness of manner made him more of a burden than a help.

Having hired some native boys, he set out for the forest and made a beginning. Very soon he obtained a knowledge of the open sore of the land, the tyranny of the Barotsi. For let a man be but a hireling wood-cutter, if he was a *Morotsi*, he considered himself a lord of creation, and treated all other natives as dogs. "They think nothing of helping themselves to the best these poor people have," writes Waddell. "When they travel, they simply go into a Mangete village, and not only demand food, but make the women cook it ; and

they think little of taking a whip to an old man, sending him off for firewood, and afterwards compelling him to go part of the way and carry the load. And if, perchance, there is girl about, they take her away, and she is enslaved for the rest of her life."

"I have only to look round among the heathen," he adds, "to see what hard labour we have before us, but ought we not to rejoice, as Mr. Coillard says, that 'it hath pleased God to choose us, unworthy creatures, to a post the very angels of heaven envy'? And is it not an honour to be permitted to obey the Lord's last command, 'Go ye and teach all nations'? We are amongst savages of the very lowest type, caring for nothing but what satisfies the cravings of their fleshly lusts. Nevertheless, I love them, not because of any virtue in them, but for the sake of Him who died for them, as well as for us. And although it is not my lot to preach, and a thing I cannot do, yet I hope, while working with and among them, that my life and example will help to mould them to the likeness of our Lord and Master."

Within a few weeks the framework of the house was completed, and the thatching commenced. Grass was difficult to obtain, and women were hired with beads to gather it. "Our grass merchants," he writes, "are great cheats, putting reeds, sticks, green grass, and all manner of rubbish into the heart of their bundles. But after being deceived once or twice, we have got up to their dodges, and make them undo their bundles."

It was Waddell's hope one day to have apprentices trained under his own hand, but he got the offer of some whom he was glad to dispense with. The wily

king, casting an envious eye on his skill, despatched twelve elderly Barotsi from the capital, to learn from him, but they were politely sent back. "They would have been welcome to strain their eyes, gazing at our work, but we cannot afford to feed and pay them for doing nothing. We have no food, and no work for gentlemen, and they disdain the work of a hireling."

But with his Mangete boys he got on splendidly from the start. They took to him, and were most willing to learn, but some things he could not get them to comprehend. One great handicap he had was the lack of scaffolding, as the cutting of planks for that purpose with a hand-saw would have cost as much labour as the building itself. "A stranger might say, why not put the natives to adze trees," he writes. "That we have tried, but they simply reduce the tree to almost the same round form. Being used to nothing but round work, they seem unable to get out of the habit, which has grown to be a second nature. To us it seems strange that they do not grasp at once the benefit of wood being squared."

However, by the end of the year, the house was nearly ready, and on Christmas Day we find him busy putting the window and door frames together. "It is hard," he writes, "to realise that to-day is a holiday of rejoicing throughout Christendom, to commemorate the birth of our Saviour. The boys don't ask for a holiday, or for a Christmas box, and have no conception of a holiday or a day of rejoicing. I hope, when Christmas comes again, they will be joining in our service of praise."

During these early days, when he was clearing away the bush from the station, and sleeping in temporary

quarters, he had many restless nights from leopards and hyænas, and he describes a method by which more than one hyæna was secured. A loaded musket, with a piece of high meat tied to the muzzle, and attached by a string to the trigger, was placed on two forked sticks. Branches were then planted on each side, and bent over the barrel, leaving only room for the animal's head to enter. "As the hyæna is of a sneaking disposition he takes to it easily, and creeping up in the dark snaps at the meat, and blows his brains out." He had to keep a constant watchfulness over the poultry, not only against leopards, but against snakes, and one night, in killing a snake under a hen, he shot off the toes of the fowl, which lived for many years to display the marks of its narrow shave. New Year's Day (1887) found him still alone, "battling," as he says, "between tropical rain and hot beams of sunshine, and finding it very hard to realise that at home it may be frost and snow." Three years had now run since he set out from Leribé, years of hardship, difficulty, and danger, and he records his gratitude for his preservation in health and strength. "I am thankful that, in spite of repeated attacks of fever, I have always been well when most needed, and have been able to put up the necessary shelters for the comfort of God's servants, and if my labour has saved them one attack of fever, or perhaps their life, why, I ought to rejoice to have been permitted to do such work."

Mrs. Coillard's arrival on the 12th of January was a great event in Sefula. People gathered from all parts to witness the unique event, for she was the first white woman to cross the Zambesi and enter Barotsiland.

One after another went up to the waggon as it moved into Sefula, shouting, "We greet thee, princess, good morning, our mother" (*Shangwe, Khosi, lumelama rona*). Alighting from the waggon, she went to inspect the house that Waddell had almost ready for her, and expressed a wish to travel no more.

All were eager to see the white people eat, and they crowded round the door, watching the strange folk who did not squat and eat off the ground, but sat, as they said, "on high stools and ate off a stage (*palamalo*)."  
"It was rather amusing," writes Waddell, "to overhear them afterwards discuss how we lifted the food to our mouth. 'Cokey' (split me), said one, 'they lift it with a short fish-spear, and not with their fingers.' 'How white are their dishes!' said another. But the greatest discussion was about the white table-cloth, and how many native suits it would make."

Very soon the king appeared to pay his respects to Mrs. Coillard, and to arrange for the sending of Prince Litia, the heir-apparent, and some of the other princes and sons of chiefs to the school which she hoped shortly, with the assistance of Aaron, to open. At first he was rather shy in her presence, and was somewhat taken aback at being invited to eat with her, but with a woman's cleverness she won him over by a cup of tea.

This time he came in full royal splendour with his court fools and drummers who made night hideous. A clown, dressed in a hyæna's skin, imitated the cries and habits of the animal so perfectly that he deceived the very dogs. Through the night the drums went *tum, tum*, pausing only now and then, that the human hyæna might raise a shout to show his master that









he was on the watch. "His majesty being so accustomed to the band," writes Waddell, "says that he cannot sleep without it. It may be so, but oh! our heads in the morning. If we applauded that band once in the night, we wished it far enough, fifty times, and felt thankful that the station was a respectable distance from that horrid music." Waddell gives us a description of these musical instruments so essential to the king's rest. They consist of two drums and a *Serimba*. "The drums are tastefully carved out of a solid block of wood, in size and shape almost similar to the iron rollers used by farmers for turnip drills. They are slung over the drummers' necks like an ordinary drum. No sticks are used, but a clump of beeswax is plastered on the hands to prevent them from being blistered. The *Serimba* is a peculiar instrument difficult to describe. Ten pieces of hard, cross-grained sounding wood, varying from 18 inches to 9 inches in length, 3 inches broad, and  $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch thick, are fixed on, horizontally, across a frame, 4 feet long. Under the pieces of wood are tied ten gourds or calabashes, with the top ends cut off, making vases or cups, and differing in length, the longest being 1 foot, and the smallest 6 inches. The instrument weighs about 20 pounds, and the player carries it in front of him, and hammers away on the pieces of wood with two little drum-sticks, headed with native india-rubber. The sound is something between that of a banjo and a tambourine."

Before he left, the king chose a place not more than 300 yards from Mr. Coillard's house, and gave orders for the building of huts for Litia and the young princes.

Mr. Coillard and Aaron now began to visit in the surrounding country, and try to win the confidence of the people. As many as a hundred and fifty would gather on the Sunday ("the day one dies," they called it), though most, it is feared, came in the hope of reward. A new vexation arose with the arrival of a crowd of Barotsi from the capital, to build the houses for the princes. "These men simply behaved like brutes," writes Waddell, "to the poor Mangete who came from the Sefula Valley, with pumpkins and mealies, seeking a market at the Mission. Hardly were the articles off their shoulders, when the Barotsi made a rush and went off with them all. And if, perchance, the goods were sold, these Barotsi compelled them to do their work; and threatened to choke them if they refused. The Mangete knew too well what it is to be choked by a *Morotsi*, and offered no resistance. For a *Morotsi* is expert in the art of choking. Men and women all have had a trial of it, for their quarrels mostly end in choking. The very children are constantly saying to one another, 'I will choke you if you do this or that.' With the grown-up people it is no play, but one of their ways of torture. They allow their nails to grow to the length of eagles' claws, and sink them into the flesh until sometimes the victim succumbs." This of course had the effect of frightening the people away from the Mission, and frustrating all its work.

It was no long time before the king reappeared with his drums and human hyæna to see the progress of affairs. This time there was added to the melody of the night the additional cry of *qua! qua!* that came from the throat "of an old human crow," who,

says Waddell, "lives here and is well named, for not one of our poor oxen can die without this old fellow being about, but he makes himself scarce on Sundays."

A favourite resort of Lewanika when he came to Sefula was Waddell's workshop, and Waddell had many opportunities of studying the strange mixture of good and evil in his nature. "While Lewanika is with us," he says, "it is hard to realise that he is such a savage, for there is something attractive in him. He has redeeming qualities. He is not a lover of strong drink. He has good tastes, and is a great carver of wooden utensils. He takes pleasure in planting trees, a thing almost unknown to a savage. He knows the various woods and their qualities better than any of his people. But morally he is no better than they. He lacks firmness of character, nay, he is as fickle and changeable as the weather. He can be cruel and wicked, and yet is affectionate and tender-hearted to his family or to a sick person. He is kind and merciful toward dumb animals. In intelligence he stands head and shoulders above his subjects. He has a good knowledge of the geography and history of his country, and is undoubtedly the best Barotsi statesman, although he is no orator. He is anxious, as he says, to learn to read, and to know about the laws of God. But the thirst of his nature is for money and the good things of this life. And although he likes sitting at table with us, it goes somewhat against the grain of his royal nature that the house and its contents are not his."

Another visitor to the Mission who was not so welcome was Mokwaë (queen) of Nalolo, Lewanika's

sister and co-ruler. Her reputation had come before her, and it was an evil one, for she had had nine husbands, none of whom, it was said, had died a natural death. "My first impression," says Waddell, "was that she was as ugly as she was said to be wicked. She is a woman of about twenty stones in weight, and bears a strong family resemblance to the king. But she has neither the discretion nor the etiquette of her brother, and she brings with her a train of men and meddlesome girls who are worth the watching, as they are not above helping themselves, and perhaps their royal mistress, to knives, forks, spoons, or anything they think they can conceal. Mokwaë would like to appear great in our eyes, but it is not above her dignity to carry a piece of paper as a pin-cushion, in readiness for any pins she may find. She has an inquisitive and covetous eye, and must see into the heart of everything. Above all, she dearly likes to get into Mrs. Coillard's bedroom, in order to see herself in the glass."

Her husband, a soft, submissive creature, accompanied her. He dared not sit on her mat without permission, had to eat after her, and crouched beside her as if he were a dog. He was also forbidden to take a second wife like other chiefs. "Can you carve wood like the king?" Mrs. Coillard asked him. "No." "Can you make baskets or spears?" "No." "And what can you do?" "I can eat," he answered proudly.

During these early days the Mission could do little more than maintain its hold, and the lives of the missionaries were in hourly danger. Nothing more was needed than the condemnation of a witch-doctor

to bring about their deaths. Every day they saw men and women being burned for witchcraft, and they did not know when their own turn might come. "Cold-blooded murder with the Barotsi," writes Waddell, "is not so great a crime as bewitching; indeed, it is the only crime they take special notice of. A murderer may escape punishment, but there is no rest in the nation if they think that a *moloji* (sorcerer) is at large." Anything mysterious or supernatural is put down to witchcraft. A boy with a bent arm says he is bewitched. If a woman has a deformed or still-born child, she believes she has been bewitched. If a hunter is not successful, it is because someone has bewitched his gun. If a man has a cow that does not calve for two or three years in succession, someone has bewitched it. He goes to the witch-doctors, generally of the Ma-Mbunda tribe. "These crafty old rascals," writes Waddell, "take the job in hand for a big fee (in many cases a slave) to find out the sorcerer. If they do not already know of some hated person, they wait to hear. Then with a basket of dice, composed of all manner of bones, parings of nails, claws, web-feet, &c., they pretend to have discovered the man, who is then brought before the *lekhothla* (tribunal). They take a fowl and test it with *moati* (poison ordeal), and if it dies, the man is guilty." Punishment follows speedily. "The victim is placed astride a pole above the flames, and the crowd watch and curse the poor wretch as he burns. From this practice comes the dreadful oath, *cokey* (may I split). This word is in everyday use as an expression of surprise, but it is also a dreadful curse, and people have been known to burst a

blood-vessel and die through the fright of the oath."

All through this anxious time Waddell pursued his building, and by-and-by the place began to have the appearance of a mission station. With his own hands he built a dwelling-house, a study, a kitchen, a store-house, and a workshop. He came to see the rare approach that was got to the native mind through the industrial side of mission work. If the people could not yet appreciate the gospel of Coillard, they had a very real appreciation of the goods of Waddell. "They have their pottery," he writes, "but they see ours, and know that it is better. They have earthen pots, but ours are iron; they see our enamelled dishes that will not break, and our tinned meat and milk, which are a perfect mystery to them. They look through our glass windows, touch them, and look at each other with a look of amazement, saying, 'The missionaries are people of God truly.' They see and feel the power of our medicines. They see me sawing, planing, and boring holes without the use of burning irons. All are powerful lessons to give them faith in the missionary's teaching, and a grand argument against their superstitions and beliefs in sorceries and witch-doctors." We do not wonder that Waddell came to be known among the natives as *Ganguro* (the man who knows all works).

The opening of the school by Mrs. Coillard, and the coming of Prince Litia, and the other noble youths from the Capital, confronted the Mission with a problem which perplexes it down to the present day. The people of Sefula could not be got to send their children to the same school as their masters attended ;

they could not believe that what was for the Barotsi could be for them ; and besides, they feared that their children would be ordered to live with them, which meant, to be their slaves. The king also saw no use in the lower tribes receiving education, but wanted to reserve all its benefits for the Barotsi. "What is the use of teaching those black things of the forest?" he said to Coillard, speaking of the people of the Sefula Valley. Through this tyranny of the *borena* (ruling class) the missionaries have experienced all through the greatest difficulty in getting into touch with the lower tribes.

In other ways the presence of the princes proved a source of endless worry. Lewanika made no provision for their board, but left them to supply themselves by robbing the people of the surrounding country, which they proceeded to do with a will. Litia's bodyguard waylaid the natives bringing corn, &c., for sale, to the Mission, and took without payment whatever they needed, claiming it as their right. The result was that the people ceased to come, and Mrs. Coillard was in distress to find daily food for the household. The princes next turned their attention to the Mission storehouse and garden, and what they did not get they stole, or their attendants stole for them. "Also, I dare not turn my back without shutting my shop door," writes Waddell, "for they are constantly helping themselves to tools, nails, or anything they want. And the worst of it is, my two men would never dare to say 'no' if a prince asked for anything. There is nothing that pleases a Zambesian like the flattery of a prince, and they think themselves highly favoured to steal for the young princes." There was of course no redress, not even acknowledgment, unless they were



caught red-handed. "King David said in his haste, 'All men are liars,' says Waddell, "but had he lived here, he might have said it at his leisure. Lies seem more natural to the Barotsi than truth, and we have noticed, if they tell the truth, that it is more by mistake than good intention."

These young bloods kept the people not only from sending their children, and bringing their produce, but even from coming to the Sabbath service, lest they should be attacked. The worries of the school undermined the health of Mrs. Coillard and hastened her end. Waddell had also troubles, specially his own, in his building labours. He met with a constant source of annoyance in the white ants and boring beetles, which followed up his work at every step. Hardly was the house completed when the ants, "which stick at nothing short of metal, glass, and pottery," were busy in the walls and thatch sending down showers of dust, and peppering the very food on the table. The boring beetles commenced in the rafters, rendering some of them completely useless after a short time. This compelled him to make a thorough study of the various woods, and we find among his papers a tabulated list of some thirty different kinds, with those especially noted that offer most resistance to the "borers."

Having finished the necessary dwelling and out-houses, he proceeded to the most laborious task of all, the building of the church. The work had again and again to be left to attend to other calls, for, as he says, on a new mission station, "everything is wanted sooner than immediately," but by November, 1888, little more than two years after their arrival, he had



completed the framework, and commenced the thatching. "It is a big work for a white man," he writes, "under an African sun, but I thank God for health and strength. Mr. and Mrs. Coillard come round occasionally and cheer me on with a word of encouragement. 'It looks better from above than from beneath,' I said to Mrs. Coillard. 'That's right,' she said. 'May we and our work always look better from above.' We need encouragement in a land like this, and if it were not the thought of working for the One above, with an occasional word of encouragement from one another, the work would become intolerable."

But he was never satisfied to be merely an artisan, diffident as he might be about his gifts in any other direction. He returned to his old love and taught in the Sabbath School. "But I sometimes wish I could help in the way of preaching," he writes. "Not that I dislike my special calling, for how could the tabernacle have been built if the craftsmen had wanted to do Aaron's work? But in a country like this, where each in turn has fever, and each must take his turn of nursing, the craftsman would almost need to have the qualities of the priest."

## CHAPTER VII

### AT HOME AMONG THE PEOPLE

THE comfortable home-dweller likes to sit and dream of the romance of missions, but to the man in the field it is wearing, monotonous work, which nothing but a strong faith in God can carry through ; and few missionaries have lived more laborious days than Waddell. He toiled on unrestingly, often with enfeebled body, and without a thought of self. Seventy pounds a year was his slender salary from the Mission, and half of that found its way back every year to the Mission treasury. His thoughts often turned to the homeland, especially in spring, which was so different on the Zambesi. "Nature smells of Spring," he writes, "but we miss the cuckoo and the singing of birds, for though there are plenty of birds with beautiful plumage, they do not sing." Again and again we meet this lament in his letters. "The natives never say a bird *sings*. Everything with them *cries*—birds, animals, and people, even the very kettle." Few posts penetrated to that lonely place, sometimes but one a year, and he heard little of the outside world ; but one sad letter from his brother George brought him the news of his father's death, which grieved him deeply. "I could read no more," he says, "and said good-night, and retired to be alone with God. Strange to say,

next evening, on being asked along with others to put my hand in a box filled with texts on slips of paper, I found these comforting words on the one I picked, 'I will be a Father unto you.'" This was the occasion of a very touching letter of comfort from Coillard to Waddell's mother in Scotland. "Have no anxiety about your son," he wrote. "He is a member of our little family. We love him, and he knows it. He is, I think, happy. He is certainly cheerful. And God honours him and blesses him. His part in the work is not a small one, and his presence with us has been one of the greatest blessings the Lord has granted us."

Occasionally traders and hunters would come their way and enjoy their hospitality, but few showed any appreciation of their work. Mr. F. C. Selous, the African hunter, spent some days on their station, and entertained them with tales of his adventures. The arrival of three missionaries, Rev. and Mme. Louis Jalla and Dr. Dardier, to occupy other parts of the field brought new stimulus, but their posts were far distant, and within a short time Dr. Dardier succumbed to fever.

Waddell hardly knew the name of holiday, but one diversion he greatly enjoyed was a visit to the Capital. Although it was his first visit, many faces were familiar, and from many whom he did not know he received the hearty greeting, "*Lumela, Ganguro*" ("Good morning, *Ganguro*"). The king was very gracious, showed him all over his house, and handed him, in parting, a beautiful little battle-axe as a souvenir of his visit.

But he was not sorry to get back to his quiet life at Sefula. "To have a headache at the Capital," he writes, "is not a wonder, as one gets so little sleep on account of the din from drums and dancing, in addition

to the band of Lewanika. While we were there a big dance was held, which lasted all night, that the king might give them an ox to slaughter (a common practice), but I think any sane man would rather give them an ox to be quiet, for the dancing and clapping of hands, combined with the accompaniment of the drum, is enough to drive a sane man mad. No sleep, no rest, nay, as the night advanced, louder and louder grew the chant, fiercer and fiercer the clapping of hands, till men and women alike seemed intoxicated, or demented. At daybreak I got up to see the dance which was still in full swing, with women singing or screaming, and clapping hands, and an elderly woman, wet with perspiration, beating the drum to about seventy excited men in kilts of leopards' and monkeys' tails."

On his return to Sefula he found that the white ants had reduced all his books to powder, among them a Bible which his mother had given him on leaving for Africa, and which he greatly prized.

To the other troubles of the land was added for a time a plague of mad dogs, from whose bite both cattle and people died, including a favourite minister of the king and two of the king's wives. Waddell succeeded in killing about twenty of them. "The last I killed was on Sunday, outside the kitchen door, while it was making a rush at the girls. On hearing the screams I rushed from the breakfast table, caught hold of a pestle, and clubbed it on the spot." He was, as Coillard said, "always ready for anything."

The world he lived in, and the life that went on around, had for Waddell a consuming interest. Many pages of his journal are filled with descriptions of native pursuits, accompanied by drawings of their

tools and handiwork. His frank and open nature, and readiness for every emergency, as well as his wonderful skill, gained the admiration of the natives who delighted to show him their work, sure of a word of appreciation. He watched the women making their papyrus mats, moulding their pottery with the hand, weaving their baskets, spinning and weaving their rough cotton with a very primitive loom. "Perhaps none of their work deserves so much notice as their wicker-work," he writes. "They make a great variety of baskets from grasses and the split roots of trees, which they intertwine with dyed inner bark, making various artistic designs and colours on the same basket. Some are almost close enough to hold water." He took a special interest in the iron-smelters, and went to see them at work 18 miles away, at Kataba. "They dig the ore from the bottom of the lake," he writes, "and erect a furnace, which is simply three holes in the ground two feet deep. The centre hole being the furnace is plastered with clay, the other two holes, about a foot on each side of the furnace, are for the bellows, which, when the furnace is charged with ore and charcoal, are kept blowing day and night until the iron is smelted and rendered malleable. The native bellows, like everything they possess, are very rude, being carved out of a block of wood, in appearance like two little pots or bowls, placed side by side, with spouts or tubes that run into each other at a distance of 18 inches. Skins are tied slackly over the bowls, and with a stick or handle, from the centre of each, a boy blows the fire by working them up and down, imitating and keeping time to the beat of the drum." But naturally it was the work of the

native carpenters that attracted Waddell most, and rude though it was, it won his admiration.

“Some examples of their round work,” he writes, “are so very accurate that a novice could be made to believe they were turned on a lathe. And it is all done without a mark, far less a compass; they simply chop away till the exterior is to their taste. Practically their only tool is an adze, but in their hands it is a wonderful instrument, as it not only does the work of an axe and adze, but is plane, spokeshave, paring-chisel and mortise-iron combined. Hitherto their designs have all been handed down to them; but they are great mimics, for we were no sooner in the country than they carved dishes and stools to imitate our waggons.” He admired specially the woodwork of the king, which he thought surpassed that of any of his subjects, and speaks of an artistically carved dish he presented to Mrs. Coillard, which, save for an attempt to carve buffaloes on the lid, might have passed for the work of a skilled European. But his carpenter’s heart was grieved at the extravagance of the native carpenters, who would often destroy a whole tree to make a single dish. The young princes on the station, Prince Litia especially, who had inherited his father’s gift, spent much of their time in carving, and caused Waddell no small annoyance by their zeal. “Like all natives,” he says, “they see no beauty in nature, and cut down the nearest tree to hand, regardless whether it spoils the beauty of the place or not. Were it not that I acted as policeman, they would soon have all the trees on the station stunted or demolished.”

Each tribe in Lewanika’s kingdom, he tells us, is noted for some particular craft, such as the Barotsi

for wood-carving and canoe-making, and the Ma-Mbundas for weaving, but the true craftsmen of the Valley are the poor despised Matolelas, whose special branch is iron-work. These people, besides being the blacksmiths of the Barotsi, are their hewers of wood and drawers of water. They have never been a fighting people, but they supply all the other tribes with weapons of war, such as spears, axes, and arrows, as well as agricultural tools. And now the introduction of the gun has opened to them new possibilities. With these Matolela blacksmiths Waddell struck up a hearty friendship, and greatly esteemed their skill. "As for making a gun-stock," he says, "no European could make one so well with the same tools; and the strange thing is, that they never so much as line it off before starting. One day I was passing a smithy (which, by the way, is only a grass roof, 3 feet high), while one of the men was chopping away at a large piece of wood for a gun-stock. I asked him to give it to me, and placing it on my gun, took a piece of chalk from my pocket, and drew out the shape, much to their amusement. But they never would dream of doing such a thing themselves." In such ways Waddell endeared himself to the natives, who still talk of him and tell of the doings of *Ganguro*. But he could be firm too, and neither for king nor subject would he consent to repair a gun, or even put in a screw. He knew that if he once began, it would be a cause of endless trouble and jealousy, and in the face of almost daily pleading he resolutely refused. "They cannot understand why a great *Ganguro* like me cannot mend a gun, but the reason is that I won't."

Between him and the natives whom he hired as apprentices there grew up a specially close intimacy. They knew his kindness of heart, and when they had displeased him would drop upon their knees and clap their hands in his face, until they made him laugh, when they would say that his *bahalli* (temper) was not bad. But they knew also how far they might go. Beside him in his workshop lay his Bible, and often he would take it up and read a pointed text. The young princes also, Litia included, got many a straight word on their visits to his workshop. He had a special liking for the Book of Proverbs, which, he discovered, had many apt words for princes.

One continual source of irritation was the frequency with which his apprentices were changed. No sooner had they attained some measure of skill, and were beginning to be of service, than they were beguiled away by the king to be his master-builders in Lealui, and he had to begin again with raw hands. However, by the close of 1888, the church was approaching completion, and was already thatched. On the night before Christmas a storm severely tried it, but it proved equal to the strain. "The whole church seemed to tremble with every peal of thunder and every hurricane of wind as it entered the open building threatened to carry away the roof. For nearly half-an-hour forked and sheet lightning, red, white, and blue, flashed among the trees, dazzling one's eyes, and filling one with bewilderment and awe, while the branch of some ancient tree came crashing to the ground." But next day brought a serene and happy Christmas, the meaning of which some were now beginning to understand.



On New Year's Day (1889) he laid aside his tools to have a romp with the children of the school for whom Mr. and Mrs. Coillard had prepared a treat. The children had an unceasing interest for Waddell. He taught them the games he played as a boy, and "rounders" became a feature of every children's gathering. He made bats and wickets, and tried to teach them cricket, to which however they did not take so kindly. "What a good thing it would be," he says, "if the Barotsi children would turn to athletics. It would strike at indolence and their awful *bapala* (amusements), which are too often mixed with sin. Children of five and six will sit round a fire and hear all sorts of cruel and immoral talk that becomes the predominant habit of their later life. There are few if any *children* here, for, as a rule, they do not talk or play as children, but have more sinful old-fashioned talk. Their passion is dancing. The grown-up people never seem to weary of drumming and dancing, and if the children get hold of a bucket, or tin can, or anything that sounds, they turn it into a drum. Still they have some forms of recreation. The bigger boys play at hunting and become expert with bow and arrow, while the smaller boys and girls play in the sand at digging gardens and building toy villages. The boys make tiny kraals of reeds or straw, and fill them with toy cattle made of clay, and the girls play at pottery and mat-making, or carry little dolls on their backs, in imitation of their mothers. During the inundation fishing is their fail-me-never, and children of five years and upward are seen making traps of reeds and rushes, and catching the smaller fish, while the bigger

boys go out and spear the larger fish in the moonlight."

With the opening of the church, the little mission station began to have an air of completeness. Everyone who came that way was filled with astonishment at the achievement of Waddell with so scanty an equipment of tools and helpers. "One traces everywhere the skilful hand of Mr. Waddell," wrote Mr. L. Jalla in the following year. "I specially admired the chapel, which is a masterpiece, given the conditions of the country."\*

Things were now in the way of getting into a regular routine. The risks of the first days were disappearing, but the hardships continued. Supplies were difficult to obtain, as either they had to come by canoe, or through the tsetse forests. Boxes went amissing, tea arrived already infused from the water of the Zambesi, and one long expected box, when opened, was found to contain, instead of clothes and literature, nothing but cheque books and blotting-paper! There were many disappointments. Coillard toiled round the villages, inviting people to the Sabbath services, but it was years before any evident impression was made. Mrs. Coillard in enfeebled health dragged herself day by day to the school. She had no longer the assistance of Aaron, who had returned to Basutoland, and the work overtaxed her strength. So the greatly understaffed Mission struggled on.

\* Another visitor, Dr. Johnston, in his "Reality *versus* Romance in South Central Africa," describes it as "a model mission station."





## CHAPTER VIII

### FIRST SHOTS OF SPRING

WE must now pass briefly over the next three or four years of Waddell's life at Sefula. His ability to turn his hand to anything made him indispensable. He was joiner, blacksmith, tinsmith by turns. "I had to leave off making the church window-frames to be a blacksmith," he writes, "as nearly all the spade handles were broken at the shoulder. That necessitated my forging new sockets from old wheel tires, and riveting them to the spades. Then I had no sooner dropped the trade of blacksmith than I had a turn at being a tinsmith, and with the zinc lining of a packing case I put new bottoms in the galvanised water-buckets, which had become more like sieves than water-vessels. And as Mrs. Coillard found I had become a good tinker, it became the order of the day, and she turned out for soldering tin basins, milk-pails, &c." Nothing came wrong to Waddell in the way of work.

His great regret was that he did not obtain a better command of the language. "But," he says, "after a day of weary toil I cannot apply myself to mental work; besides, the candle is a consideration. However, if my vocabulary of Sesutó is not sufficient for preaching, it is enough to gain affection, and to witness

to my Saviour. And I am no more at a loss to direct the workmen, for when difficulties occur, or the men say such and such a tree is too difficult to tackle, a joke generally settles the matter and removes the difficulty."

The monotony of the Mission was broken from time to time by a visit from the king, who liked to hear the children read, and was greatly delighted with their games. On New Year's Day, 1890, he appeared with his principal wives, and some of his ministers of state, and on the following day came Mokwaë, with an even greater body of followers, so the Mission had a stirring time. The king first made an inspection of the children; class by class stood up before him and read, while he sat, book in hand, and followed the reading of every scholar. Then he made a speech, painfully short, but his lack of oratory was no sorrow to the children, who were already casting greedy eyes on the feast of boiled mealie bread and beef which was being made ready for them. After eating came the games, with "rounders" as prime favourite. The evening was concluded with a lantern entertainment, which was the greatest success of all, Mr. Coillard having transferred to slides a number of Zambesi photographs, including some noteworthy characters, such as Masatoane, with his one eye, whose appearance on the screen was greeted with tremendous laughter. "New Year's Day," says Waddell, "was altogether a happy one for the children, and indeed for everyone. As for myself, I felt quite a boy again."

Slowly the Mission began to show the first shoots of spring. The school especially, which had long been held under the shade of a tree, now filled the church,

and the children were full of promise. Waddell, having gone on a three-weeks' journey to the Lumbé River to repair a broken-down waggon, had an opportunity on his return of comparing Sefula as he first saw it with its present lively condition. "How pleasant it is," he writes, "to come off a journey now, compared to our first arrival. Then, we had to make our way through the ashes of burnt brushwood, now we ascend an open road, with trees and bushes on either side. And instead of entering a wilderness, we are greeted by ever so many merry school children, who are the life of the station. Many of them now read the New Testament, and even possess copies of their own. To-day we counted twenty-four children with hymn-books and New Testaments. What a change from the days when they wanted payment for listening, when not a soul could read, and had they been given a book, they would have thrown it away as a witch of the white man!"

While many, of course, still continued to come to the services in the hope of receiving a present, some signs of a more serious spirit were beginning to show among the older ones. Litia lost taste of the company of his cousins and the others of his village, and begged Mr. Coillard to be allowed to build a house inside the Mission yard, which, under the direction of Waddell, he proceeded to do.

On the 25th of May, 1890, Mr. Coillard had the happy privilege of baptising the first Zambesi convert, Nguana-Ngombé, who had been a servant in the Mission from the start, and was one of its most loyal helpers until he was coveted and tempted away by Lewanika. In professing his faith, he made a

speech to his comrades, which greatly charmed the missionaries. "And you, my friends," to give Waddell's version of it, "when are you coming? What prevents you from being converted? Are you afraid of your chiefs, or do you wish to enjoy the pleasures of sin in your youth, or are you making a *monkey* of me, and waiting to see if I fall on grass or thorns? You are doing with me as the monkeys do when they go to hunt or steal. You push me forward, as they do one of their children, to see if there is no danger of wasps or traps ahead. And if no calamity befalls it, but it fares well, then the old ones make a rush for the feast. That is just what you are doing with me; you are waiting to see what will become of me. I cannot answer for my future, but one thing I know, I was once a great sinner, but Jesus saved me, and I am His."

While the Mission was rejoicing in the first-fruits of its work, troubles arose from an unexpected quarter, and its very existence was jeopardised. Ever since his return to power, it had been the ambition of Lewanika to obtain British protection, for he felt this was the one way to secure himself against another revolution. Again and again he urged on Coillard to sit down and write a letter to the Queen of Britain. At last Coillard, though most reluctant to interfere in political matters, agreed to act as interpreter, and Mr. Elliot Lochner left for Barotsiland as the envoy of the British South African Company, and arrived in April, 1890. After an interview with the king he became the guest of Coillard while the negotiations were in progress. In June the first treaty was signed, and Barotsiland became a British Protector-



ate. Some disappointed concession seekers, including the artisan X., who had since deserted the Mission to become a trader, now began to poison the minds of Lewanika and his ministers, telling them that their land had been sold to a mining and trading association, and that all the talk about British protection was sheer humbug. The king was furious with Coillard for leading him, as he thought, into this trap and for a time refused to listen.

“Instead of our peace being secured,” Waddell writes, “by the arrival of Lochner, the Mission is at stake, and the country is thrown into a state of excitement almost similar to what it was on our arrival.” X. became for a period secretary to Lewanika, and did all he could to blacken Coillard’s character. Letters were intercepted and misconstrued, and all kinds of stories spread, to the injury of the Mission. The station was nearly burned down, and there was a strong suspicion of incendiarism. Coillard was summoned to the Capital, and went, hardly expecting to return alive. But he faced his accusers, and turned the tide in his favour. A letter of reproach from Khama, who told Lewanika that if he did not keep his contract he would *see his face*, helped to calm him, and with a letter from Sir Henry Loch, assuring him that the British South African Company represented the Queen, and a Resident would shortly be sent, the storm blew past. The intention clearly was to keep back British protection, drive the missionaries from the country, and secure the spoils for the trader. But though it was defeated, it was long before the Mission regained confidence in the minds of the chiefs, or even with the king.

X. had sown seeds of unbelief in the minds of Lewanika and his ministers which continue to bear their unhappy fruits to-day. "It grieves us," writes Waddell, "to think of the man who used to pray for Lewanika now telling him that the missionaries' teaching is a pack of lies, and the Bible a collection of legends like the legends of the Barotsi. The other day two young men, pupils of our school who had been in this man's company, came to me and asked me in a mocking way if I ever saw God, and who was the devil? 'The latter,' I said, 'was the father of him who told you to ask such a question.'"

About this time a fresh interest was given to his life by the news that some friends in Glasgow were sending out to him a circular saw, with all the fittings for its erection at Sefula. His diary fairly bubbles over with joy at the prospect. No sooner did he receive the plans for the bench than he started for the forest to cut timber, and have all in readiness for the arrival of the gift that was so greatly to lighten his future labours. "Now I am camped in the forest," he writes gaily, "ripping timber into planks for the centre part of the saw-bench. Try to think of me in the bright moonlight, seated behind a fence of bushes, and from the end of a tree trunk, which serves as a table, eating what I call a well-earned meal, though it has cost me nothing but a cartridge. And in front of me is a blazing fire, with a boy singing while stirring the porridge, and my two men improving their time by making wooden dishes."

He now made a long journey down country to Kazungula, partly to bring up the heavier portions of the saw-bench, which could not be transported by





canoe, and partly to escort Miss Kiener, a young lady teacher who was coming out from Europe to assist Mrs. Coillard. The journey passed off without mishap. The adventures of the ordinary traveller had become for Waddell the common events of the day. "Owls, hyænas, and leopards kept up a concert nearly all night, but one gets used to such music, and I went to sleep in the midst of it alongside the camp fire."

But for the painful sights that met him on the journey—here a Barotsi press-gang on their way home with boy and girl slaves, there a crowd of Mangete, dragging trees for canoes, across miles of sand, to the nearest waterway—it was the best holiday which he had had for years.

When at Sesheke he received the disturbing news that a canoe had capsized, and some parts of the saw-bench had gone to the bottom of the Zambesi. "This puts a damper on my dreams of future work with the saw-mill," he writes, "which now looks like the present of a waggon that has lost a wheel." However, the lost parts were later fished up by natives from the river bed, and the saw arrived at Sefula complete after its adventurous journey. When erected, it became one of the wonders of the land. The place was besieged by men, women, and children, eager to see "the oxen splitting wood." Some gaped, some laughed, some tried to mimic the noise which it made. One old man, when he saw it, said, "We are a nation of children, but the white people are men." If only that saw-bench had come four or five years before!

Another event that afforded great pleasure, especially to the children, was the arrival of a large bell for the church, the gift of some French children.

"It was my business," writes Waddell, "to hang the bell, and a tree being chosen as a belfry, I put up the ladder and set to work, but the tree, being somewhat hollow, was inhabited by red honey-making ants, and no sooner did my axe go tap than out came a regiment of them and bit me so savagely, from head to foot, that I had to retreat faster than I came up. A boy then mounted with burning grass to fire them out, but he had no better luck, for they took refuge in his woolly hair, and made him scream as he descended the ladder. Not liking the idea of being driven off by ants, I made a fuse of saltpetre and sulphur and fired their nest, but without success, for although I thought they were done for, I had no sooner begun chopping than out they came again in battalions and drove me down the ladder. So I was conquered and had to seek a belfry in another tree."

During the next months a shadow lay upon the station through the continued illness of Mrs. Coillard. One attack of fever followed another, each leaving her weaker. Her promised visit to the Capital was postponed from month to month, but at last she persuaded Coillard to take her, believing it must be now or never. Except for an ugly adventure with a vulture which attacked her on the outskirts of the village, the visit was a pleasant one, the religious meetings especially, which she felt had been the brightest since the happy days at Leribé. Litia, the king's son, stood up and made a public profession of Christianity, and his speech was so touching that it moved his friend, Mokamba, to tears. "What a rare sight," said Mrs. Coillard, "to see a Morotsi weep, and weep for his sins! Why, I thought a Morotsi had no tears. Not so long ago I

would have gone some hundreds of miles to see a Morotsi weep, and here we see one at Lealui weeping for his sins." The sight filled her with a deep joy, and she felt she could now die in peace. On the two following days she was very weak, the strain had been too much, and she asked Coillard to take her home to die. Ten days later (28th October, 1891) she was gone, and to Waddell fell the sad duty, the saddest, he says, that he had ever been called to do, of making her coffin. He felt her loss most keenly. A woman of strong and independent mind, she was not understood by everybody, but he had found the way to her heart. She had been a mother to him, and her going left him lonelier.

The charge of the Mission household now fell upon Miss Kiener, who continues down to the present in mission work on the Zambesi. As she is the only one now living who was associated with Waddell at Sefula, some reminiscences of those days which she has sent me will be of interest.

"Mr. Waddell was a model artisan. This impression has never been effaced or weakened with the years. He toiled hard himself and taught the Zambesi boys to labour. But he was a missionary, first and foremost, and never missed an opportunity of testifying to the righteousness of God, and His love manifested in Jesus Christ. He was very methodical, his hours of work and rest were fixed, and he kept them. When he had to cut down trees, he went into the forest for days with the boys, and lived in a very simple way which he loved, holding worship with them morning and evening. On his return he was full of interesting tales, which he had



to tell. On Saturday afternoon he put his workshop in order, arranged the work for the following week, and prepared himself for the Sunday. If he could, he had a chat with one or other of the natives, and spoke to them of the Saviour, making them read out of the New Testament, and explaining passages from the Proverbs. During the mid-day rest, or in the evening before dinner, when he had taken his bath, and made his toilet, he sat himself near his door, and had a talk with the people of the station, or with visitors, or with the king. I remember having seen him with his Bible, reading portions of the Proverbs to the king, who listened, letting them be expounded to him. And Mr. Coillard said: 'Of Mr. Waddell the king *accepts everything*, without taking umbrage, for he knows that he does it with love, and for his good.' Lewanika did not always, or even often follow his counsels, but I sometimes ask myself if one or other of the evangelical truths have not at times come back to his memory. On Sundays, in coming out of church, Mr. Waddell always had some talk with those who had been present, and in the afternoon usually took a walk, or showed and explained some Bible pictures to the boys gathered round him. He was extremely humble, but he beamed when Mr. or Mrs. Coillard went to admire his work. He was in need of encouragement, as is easily understood, for he passed his days with the natives. He loved especially Mrs. Coillard, and in the evening after dinner talked and amused us, having always a plentiful supply of anecdotes. He would tell of his first experiences in Africa, and speak with a loving admiration of his father. Often he would bring to Mrs. Coillard some



eggs from the hen-house which he had constructed, and he told me that her smile did him good for the whole day. Once after her death he brought them from habit, and only recollected his mistake on finding me in the place where she usually sat, when he was overcome by deep emotion. He suffered much from the void left by her removal, and sometimes spoke to me words of faith and consolation, when I felt myself lost on the Zambesi, of which I knew so little."

## CHAPTER IX

### FRESH LABOURS

THE time was now come when Waddell should have gone home on furlough. Seven and a-half years had elapsed since he set out from Leribé, and for six years he had been doing the work of two men in one of the unhealthiest spots in Africa. Had he returned now, his life might have been spared for many years, and for some months he considered himself free to go, and was turning his face homeward. But circumstances arose which made him feel it to be his duty to remain, and notwithstanding the heavy cost that it entailed, he never questioned, nor would allow others to question, the wisdom of his decision.

We have already seen that Lewanika undertook to remove his court to Sefula, but with the procrastination native to his character he kept putting it off, until Coillard began to see that the change would never be made. What was to be done? The Mission laboured under a great disadvantage in being so far from the King's Village, and evil influences were now at work which made the task of Mr. Coillard doubly hard. His old artisan, a man whom he had respected and trusted, had apparently gained complete mastery over the king and chiefs, and his visits to Lealui were now unwelcome and stormy. So long as he was present,

Coillard could exert some influence on the king, for, as Waddell says, "he could not resist a sneaking liking for the missionary, and he enjoyed his company," but as soon as his back was turned, the intriguer gained the upper hand.

Slowly the conviction began to form that the Mission must be removed to the Capital. He put the matter before Waddell, and asked him if he was willing and able to begin again. "Well, I said, after a few seconds' pause," writes Waddell, "if you see it your duty to go there, it is my duty to give up for the present the thought of going home and build you a station." And so the question was finally settled. "I take courage in the clear conviction," he adds, "that I am following an obvious call, which, if I ever doubted, that time has long since passed. Moreover, I reckon it no mean thing to help Mr. Coillard in his increasing desire to win precious souls for the Saviour, which is his sole aim."

And so the toilsome work of building had once more to begin. It was not the intention to abandon Sefula, which had many advantages over Lealui, but circumstances demanded that the work meantime be removed to the more strategic position. No sooner was the decision taken than Waddell commenced the preparatory work. He had now the saw-mill, which allowed him to tackle it with greater hopefulness. Day after day found him hard at work in the woods, hewing trees, with his men, and carting them to the saw-mill. "The saw-mill being now complete, and in splendid working order, we have no more need to use saplings for the building of the new station. So I am encamped in the forest, felling huge *motosadi*

trees. These trees, which are very graceful, are a species of mahogany, and although they may not be so beautiful or valuable as the cedars of Lebanon, I like to think that God caused them to grow for us to build a house in which the rising generation may be taught to love and appreciate His works of nature. Our smaller boys are quite in their element driving the oxen of the saw-mill, and are almost as noisy as the mill itself. A good spirit prevails among my men, who delight in seeing the timber being cut up into pillars, beams, and rafters for the house of God." During this time he had a narrow escape from death. Driving through the forest one day he was caught by a branch around the neck, and hurled right in front of a waggon drawn by sixteen oxen, and jammed between the wheel and the stump of a tree. "The boys were a little in front, carrying the saw and axes, and *Seone* shouted to them to come back, *Ganguro* was killed. He then backed the oxen, to take the strain off the trek-chain, and the others, with a will, put their shoulders to the wheel, and extricated me from my perilous position, which resulted in little more than a bruise and a scratch. At first I laughed, but afterwards wept when I thought of the deliverance. 'Ha,' said the boys, '*Molimo* (God) has saved him; had he been a *Morotsi*, he would have been killed.'

New Year's Day, 1892, was a memorable day in the history of the Barotsi, and thousands gathered at the Station to see the marriage of *Litia*, the king's son. The little church was decorated with palms, creepers, and other plants, for he was to be married as a Christian. The royal bridegroom was dressed in a serge suit, and had provided the trousseau also for

his dusky bride. "Among the articles were a pair of shoes," writes Waddell, "which unfortunately were too small, so she appeared in her natural black shoes, which were in no way unbecoming, with her white veil and dress of yellow lustre." A table was laid under a shady tree, where the royal family might lunch in European fashion, but this was rather a failure, as Lewanika objected to eat with his wives when exposed to the gaze of his subjects. However, with a little coaxing, he consented to sit with the bride, his sisters, and daughter, and the affair passed over without further hitch.

All this time Coillard was making repeated visits to the Capital, to pave the way for his removal. "Mr. Coillard has just returned from Lealui," writes Waddell in the month of February, 1892. "His visit this time was both unpleasant and prolonged, owing to the behaviour of Lewanika, who, like King Saul of old, was troubled with an evil spirit, or as the Barotsi say, with a 'yellow heart.' He received his missionary in a way that was unworthy of his right frame of mind. At first he was opposed to everything relating to mission work, and more especially to the proposed new station. But the more he saw of the man of God, his yellow heart went from him, as did the evil spirit of King Saul before the melody of David's harp."

The traitor at court, whom Coillard called his "Alexander the Coppersmith," at last overreached himself and quarrelled with Lewanika. The wily king came to see his selfish plans, and would have no more of him. "He has gone," writes Waddell, "a disappointed man, for Lewanika would neither chase away the missionaries, nor organise an expedition to

hunt for gold. He hoped to 'strike ile' at Lewanika's expense, float a company, and sell out. Hence his hatred of the British South African Company and of Mr. Coillard as interpreter. He is gone in disgrace, and the rest of his acts, and the mischief which he did, cannot be read in any Book of Chronicles of the kings of Barotsi."

This X. who played the Mission so false was, and remained, a mystery to Waddell. He had loved him as a brother. They had prayed together for the extension of Christ's Kingdom and the conversion of the heathen. And then he turned round and said that all that he wanted of the missionaries was to get up country to trade, and his theology had been from the first that of an infidel. "It may be so," says Waddell, "but it is hard to believe that he was a wolf in sheep's clothing."

A violent epidemic of smallpox now broke out all over the Valley; labour was suspended, for the people said, "What is the use of working when we live to die?" And those who escaped the pale horse of death were threatened with the black horse of famine. Coillard was greatly perplexed. A messenger was despatched for lymph, but months would elapse before his return, and the disease was rapidly spreading. The dead bodies were not being buried but thrown amongst the reeds and bushes. So he inoculated some cows, obtained virus and began to vaccinate all and sundry, greatly against the will of the king, who grudged this waste on "the black things of the forest." "Those good people," writes Waddell, "who have no faith in vaccination, should be here to see what smallpox is without vaccination. All the school children

have been vaccinated, and although some have taken the disease, it has been very mild, except in one or two cases where the vaccination was not successful." Although Waddell makes no mention of it, either in letter or journal, we learn from Miss Kiener that he himself was very ill at this time, and believed that he was dying.

Coillard now removed to Lealui, leaving Waddell to complete the preparatory work. There was a time when the king would have rejoiced to see the tents of his missionary close to his Village, but now he was lukewarm, and did little to accommodate him. Coillard wrote to Waddell asking if he could provide a temporary shelter against sun and wind for his services, and Waddell's quick response brought back the touching note from the old missionary: "Thank you, my dear Waddell, you are a good old soldier; I like you on the battlefield."

The only spot that Lewanika would give for a mission station was a mound outside the village called Loatilé, some two acres in extent, which became an island during the inundation. It was a forlorn, repulsive spot, and had long been dreaded as a place bewitched. For centuries it had been used for the burning of those condemned for witchcraft, and was covered with human bones, bleached or blackened with fire. The soil was of a clayey nature, which with every shower of rain became a sticky paste. For ages it had been the happy hunting ground of white ants, whose industry had raised it to its present height above the valley. The whole place was covered with tropical weeds and bushes, and an entangling thorny scrub, with a repulsive odour.

This was the place to which Waddell now came to begin again the weary work of building—a terrible contrast to Sefula. Let us read his description of the place as he found it: “It is quite a paradise for nature’s scavengers. Countless myriads of insects live on this forlorn Golgotha, ever ready to follow up in the rear of the vultures. The air is full of butterflies, moths, wasps, bees, flies, and mosquitoes, while on and underneath the ground go all manner of rodents, snakes, lizards, centipedes, and millipedes, also ants, spiders, beetles, frogs, and toads, and creeping things innumerable, a vast army that no man can number. Oh, such a creepy-crawly place, with sights and smells unholy! Moreover, these vermin are determined to give us trouble for destroying their fortress. No sooner has daylight disappeared than myriads of winged insects hum around, eager to draw blood and share our evening meal. But this is not all. Countless battalions of white ants have waged war against us, and attack us by night and drive us from our tents. Talk of the plagues of Egypt! Why, we have a fair specimen of them here. But there is none that drives one mad like the black or *warrior ants*. Their marching order is certainly most beautiful, and in the moonlight their line looks like a glittering, black snake. But I pity the man or beast that treads on it. In the twinkle of an eye he is covered from head to foot by the most savage of insects. The snakes are dangerous, the rats and white ants are destructive, but these *bite*, nay, they stand on their heads and drive their fish-hook-like pincers into one’s flesh, and allow themselves to be torn in two before they will release their hold. One may laugh at the bite of a mosquito, but these



warriors would make a hero dance like a madman. One day, while I was sawing a piece of wood, unknown to me some black scouts came out of the ground under my feet, and were at my ears before the order was given to charge, when the whole company charged at once. Alas! I lost my temper, threw down my saw, and made a leap, saying, 'No, no! we shall never be able to build in this place.'

A trench was dug about the station to keep off these marauders, but it was found to be useless. "They are absolutely fearless," he continues, "and when on the march, nothing will stop them. On, on they go, until they arrive at the ditch, where there is a block for a second or two, but the procession dare not stop.

" 'Their's not to reason why,  
Their's but to do and die.' "

So pell-mell go the pioneers into the water, and cling to each other like the links in a chain. A gust of wind blows them to the opposite shore, and the body of the army passes on, while those who constructed the bridge have sacrificed their lives for the advance of their comrades."

Waddell returns again and again in his diary to the plague of insect life which infested them at Lealui. "The insects of our island are a world in themselves, and every other day I see some strange beetle, moth, or butterfly. We have at least seven varieties of ants, which differ entirely from one another in taste and habit. One or two of their tribes are harmless, inasmuch as they are content with a share of our food without eating the roof off our heads, or driving us from our beds. The white ants are a more powerful

race than their relatives at Sefula, or at least the nature of the soil gives them a double power to destroy. In the walls of our huts they make great holes or galleries, in which they build their soft, spongy nests. At Sefula our almanac might remain on the wall at least for a season, and our boots might remain on the floor for a week. But here we can have no such luxury as a picture or an almanac on the wall, and we run the risk of losing part of the soles of our boots if we leave them overnight on the floor. Of all insects the white ants are the most industrious and destructive. But their enemies, the black soldiers, are quite as interesting. The other night I witnessed a fight between a company of the *whites* and *blacks*. I had destroyed a nest of whites in the wall of my hut and while the builders were busy closing the hole, a detachment of the black scouts came sauntering into the hut and along the floor, until they were opposite the builders. Then they mounted the wall with double haste and began the attack. In the twinkling of an eye the builders threw down their mortar and prepared for the defence. They fought bravely, but they had no chance with the black warriors, who tossed them to the floor, where they were at once picked up and carried off."

By the beginning of January, 1893, the mound was cleared of the thorny bushes, and the tent gave way to six round huts, which proved a great comfort. With wind and thunderstorm the tents had been reduced almost to shreds, and the missionaries were at the mercy of all the crawling creatures of the place. In addition to the plagues already mentioned, they suffered a veritable Egyptian plague of frogs, which

congregated in hundreds in the tent roofs, and, says Waddell, were passionately fond of tumbling somersaults on to the table and into the teacups. "We find them in our beds and in our larder, and if we had the luxury of an oven, or a kneading trough, like the Egyptians of old, we would be sure to find them there also."

They now had their first experience of the inundation at Lealui. At Sefula it had little affected them, as the station was high and dry on the sand, but here they were right in the track of the rising waters of the Zambesi. "Our mound is now an island," he writes, "and when the sun breaks through the clouds after torrents of rain, a vapour rises from the damp ground, which makes the place a hot-bed of fever, and an incubator for mosquitoes and other insects. When the water began to rise, changes took place among our enemies, the original inhabitants. The frogs and the toads took to the water, but the snakes, rats, and army ants, that had passed the winter on the plain, returned to dispute our rights to the island. We have lately killed six varieties of snakes, the largest being six feet long. Some of these are very dangerous, such as the mamba, cobra, and puff-adder; but although the latter is a most deadly snake, he is rather a lazy brute, and is easily shot when swimming ashore. The rodents, which are also of a mixed race, have formed a new colony in our stack of thatching grass, others have begun housekeeping in our provision hut, which they find very convenient, when they invite their friends to a midnight banquet."

The inundation of the Zambesi is the annual holiday in Barotsiland, when the whole population goes

a float in canoes and barges, to shoot antelopes and other animals collected on the islands. Every year Lewanika builds a *Nalikuanda* (state barge), on which he goes aboard, with his bands and war-drums, to join in the hunt, followed by his wives in other royal barges. These wonderful craft, which are over 100 feet long by 12 feet broad, and 4 feet deep, are built after the same model as their canoes, with planks sewn together by cords of bark. They have neither frame nor stiffening, keel nor rudder. The bottom is flat and leaky, but the king sits on his throne high and dry, in a cabin covered with strips of calico, red, white, and blue. The paddling is done by some thirty chiefs, whose heads are adorned with lions' manes.

"The *Nalikuanda*," writes Waddell, "is very clumsy when compared with a European boat, but it is a marvellous piece of work for heathen savages. But as the Barotsi have a high idea of their skill, they need to be humbled a little before they can be instructed. They think we never saw such a wonderful boat, and truly we never did. But they looked at me with astonishment when I told them that I worked at a boat that would hold not only their great boat, but all the canoes and people besides. 'Oh!' said they, 'and how many people does it take to paddle that big canoe?' 'None,' I answered, 'we make our boats go with fire.' 'Ha! But does fire not burn the boats?' 'No, fire cannot burn iron.' 'Ha! Does the white man make his canoes with iron?' 'Yes.' 'Do they not sink?' 'No; look at that basin, it is iron, and it won't sink unless you fill it with water.' 'Truly,' said they, 'the white people are wise.'"





The previous year the royal barge had been a most ambitious affair, 129 feet long, and built according to the natives' idea of a white man's boat, but it had proved a failure. They had heard that the white men fasten their planks by iron nails, and had tried to adopt the idea, but having no frame into which to drive the nails, they completely failed. Now that *Ganguro* was at the capital, Lewanika came to have a talk with him about boat-building. Waddell told him he could never build a boat until he took the skeleton of an animal or fish for his model. "What you want," said I, "is a skeleton, and above all things, a backbone. We white people begin with a backbone called a keel, and to it we fix the ribs, which carries the planks. His majesty said I was right, and regretted that I was not free to help him."

But Waddell talked to the king also on deeper themes. One Sunday, as he was suffering from neuralgia, Lewanika did not go to the service, but sent his servant to mark the lesson and the text. In the afternoon Waddell went to see him, and found him squatting on the floor of the great hall, reading his Bible. He closed it immediately and asked for Mr. Coillard, who had been down at death's door with fever. "He is much better, *Morena* (King)," I said; "but do you know, I think the *Moruti* was not very anxious to live?" "Oh!" said he, with a smile and a click of his tongue, "there is no man but wants to live."

"But, *Morena*," I said, "the *Moruti* is sad at heart, for his work has been undone."

"Do you mean by *Litia* and the others?" he replied; "they will come back." (*Litia*, yielding to heathen influence, had taken another wife.)

“‘They may, or they may not,’ I said, ‘and there is also the *Morena*.’

“‘But I was never a *Molimati* (believer),’ he answered.

“‘No, but you know, *Morena*, that you are not what you were,’ I said.

“‘But, Willie, there is no man a *Molimati*,’ said the king.

“‘Oh, but there are,’ I said.

“‘His majesty then lifted the Bible, which he opened at a paper-mark, and asked me to read the text: ‘If any man come to Me and hate not his father and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple.’ ‘No man can do that,’ said his majesty.

“‘But, *Morena*,’ said I, ‘that means that you are to hate what is sinful in them, and love the Lord with all your heart.’

“‘But,’ said he, ‘is it in this world or the next that a man is the better of being a believer?’

“‘A believer,’ said I, ‘is promised nothing in this world but a cross, nevertheless, he has God for his Father, Jesus for his elder brother, and knowing that, he has a happiness of which the world knows nothing.’

“‘How do you know a *Molimati*?’ he continued.

“‘By his deeds,’ said I.

“‘Are you one, Willie?’ said he.

“‘Well, *Morena*,’ said I, ‘did you ever see anything in my life that would make you think that I was not one?’

“‘But,’ said he, ‘I do not see you every day.’

“‘That is true,’ I said, ‘but you are good at hearing about people’s doings; do you ever hear anything bad about me?’



“He laughed and said ‘No.’

“After that he put many straight and pointed questions that made me believe he desired to become a Christian but had not the strength to throw off the yoke of heathenism.”

Lewanika has remained to this day a borderer, halting between two opinions, and a painful illustration to the Mission Church that a “double-minded man is unstable in all his ways.” More than once he was on the point of becoming a Christian, but took fright at the “lions” and turned back. The lions in his case were the Barotsi chiefs, who declared that they would not have a Christian to rule over them. Now it is feared that his heart is growing callous.

It has been the ethical side of Christianity that has proved the chief stumbling-block to the Barotsi. They are in their way a religious people, but their religion has no outlook to morality. They believe in a god, whom they call *Molimo* or *Nyambé*, who lives somewhere above them, and hears and sees everything. He is the creator of all things, man, animal, and plant, and calls all things to their death. The different nationalities they account for by the polygamy of *Nyambé*, each nation being his offspring by a separate wife, who has given her character to the nation. The Barotsi do not dare to approach *Nyambé* directly, but through intermediaries, such as deceased kings and chiefs, who are by no means chosen on account of their exemplary lives on earth. The times for making offerings to *Nyambé* are sunrise and sunset, and the favourite offering is a bowl of fresh-drawn water, though blood is also offered. Their petitions are always for outward objects, such

as success in hunting, or deliverance from sickness, and they have a profound belief that *Nyambé* hears their prayers.

The Barotsi have shown themselves far more ready to assimilate the material benefits of the Mission. Waddell, on his arrival at the capital, found the king comfortably settled in a handsome wattle and daub palace, with four rooms and an outside corridor, which had been built for him by the carpenters trained at Sefula. But these men dared not use their skill for their own houses, as Naramongo, one of Waddell's old hands, who had superintended the work at the royal palace found to his cost. "Some time ago," writes Waddell, "I saw him sick in his village, which is down in the valley, and built on damp, spongy ground. So I said to him, 'Look here, my friend, you cannot be well lying on such damp ground. Now that you have built good houses for the royal family, why do you not choose a dry spot on the edge of the hill and build yourself a neat little house in European style?' He got well and acted on my advice, but when he had the materials together and the frame well up, some spiteful Barotsi lords fell on it and pulled it down. 'Who are you,' they said, 'daring to affect such grandeur and build a house similar to the king?'"

In such ways the Barotsi retard the progress of their nation, and break the hearts of their missionaries.

But other and still darker troubles came to discourage them. Litia, their chief hope, had succumbed to the intrigues of the heathen chiefs. Mokamba, his friend, who had wept for his sins, had drifted back into heathenism. Nguana-Ngombé, their first convert,

who had been admitted with such promise to the Church, had returned to his wallowing in the mire. It seemed as if these years of laborious toil had yielded almost nothing. But they were not the men to lose heart, nor did they believe that they had spent their strength in vain. "Oh, no," says Waddell, "there are still a few who have put their hands to the plough, and have not turned back. Besides, there is much which cannot be fully observed. Heathenism, with all its repulsiveness and cruelty, is being slowly undermined, and will eventually crumble under the influence of the Gospel."

## CHAPTER X

### LAST DAYS AT LEALUI

THE main reason why the Mission station was now undesired at the Capital was that both king and chiefs, having learned something of the Gospel of the missionaries, felt that the evil practices to which they clung would be too much exposed to their observant eyes and outspoken criticisms. One of these practices which Coillard had already denounced was the frequent cattle raids on the Mashikulumbwe, a harmless tribe, whom the Barotsi called their dogs, or cattle herds. They were a pastoral people, living without a paramount chief, and rearing large herds of a small breed of cattle. Whenever want appeared in the Valley, the Barotsi raised the cry, "To the Mashikulumbwe!" and off they marched, chiefs and people, to ravage and pillage, and drive home a plentiful supply of food. Feeling the thrust of Coillard's words, the king had already gone so far as to plead: "This time only, after that we will be good."

A still more diabolical practice was the slave-raiding made from Lealui. On some trumped-up charge they would march on an innocent tribe, spend a few glorious days in shooting, spearing, pillaging, burning, and carry back a great booty of cattle, women, and children, which was then divided among the various

Barotsi lords. Waddell describes one such raid which took place about the time he removed to the Capital. "It was great sport to the Barotsi to see a poor child, struggling and screaming, and running quite lost in the crowd, crying for its mother, who had already been carried off. And a buffoon in the *lekhothla* could not have created greater laughter than a young mother who struggled and wept when parted from her first-born and only child. Her bravery, however, surpassed that of the warriors, for with her mother's heart she conquered. Lewanika permitted her to keep her child, and the Barotsi said he was a lucky fellow who got her, as he received two slaves instead of one."

These were the surroundings amid which Waddell recommenced his toil of building. It was to be the most trying period of his labours, as it was to be the last. Though little has been said about it, he had suffered much from fever in the preceding years, and now the seeds of a darker and more terrible disease were being sown in his body. But with the last energies of a tired man he girded himself to the work. He felt that the Mission was in jeopardy, and he must support Coillard to the last inch of his strength. "He is simple in his faith, but firm as a rock," wrote Coillard to his friends at home, "and displays an admirable fidelity towards everyone, especially Lewanika. Without him I should never have been able to undertake the establishment of this new station. Our friends ought to know this. In the mission field artisans have often proved a deception and a cross. Our friend is one of the rare examples who glorify God by being an honour to their work."

One of Waddell's first cares was to build a little

one-roomed, thatched cottage for Mr. Coillard and make the old man as comfortable as he could. "The care which this kind friend puts into this work troubles me," wrote Coillard; "it seems to me almost a profanation."\* Then he pushed on with the building of the church. Under the date 30th July, 1893, he records in his journal with a sigh of relief that the framework is now finished. "Simple as it is, the Barotsi look upon it with admiration. Poor people, they never saw a larger or a better building. It is 60 feet long by 33 feet broad, and to use a big word for a small thing, it is built in cathedral fashion, with a nave or main roof, which rests on 6-inch beams, supported by eight square pillars with bracket arms. The walls are built of strong trees, with a space of 1 foot 6 inches between each, which will be filled in with reeds and finished with the orthodox plaster. It will be entered by a portico, with two doors, and lighted by twelve windows. This week I hope to begin covering the roof with grass, and simple as the work is, I cannot leave it entirely to the natives. It must be carefully done, and it is rather a wearisome job under a tropical sun. This roof, with its surface of nearly 4000 feet, is by far the largest I have yet attempted."

While the church was in process of construction, Coillard continued his teaching and preaching in the large temporary tent. From a handful, the school grew rapidly to over 200 scholars, and the station began to assume some of the brightness of Sefula. The young ladies and aristocrats came by canoe, accompanied by their slaves, and the rank and file

\* Mr. Coillard had wished to have the church built *before* his own house.

came plunging through the mud and water, their native element. It mattered not whether it was too deep to wade, for the Barotsi are like their cattle, and can swim as soon as walk. The shepherd boys had but to whistle on their calves, and were towed through the water, clinging to their tails. The services were also well attended, and Coillard was encouraged by the interest that was awakened. The king came regularly, and greatly enjoyed the preaching of the missionary, notwithstanding that many an arrow was directed at his own heart. "Thou art weighed in the balance and found wanting," was one of Coillard's pointed texts. Tears would sometimes be seen to gather in the king's eyes as the people sang the touching Basuto hymn, "Come to Jesus, thou slave of sin." "Poor king," says Waddell, "the Gospel has been faithfully presented to him, and he has felt its power. But the other evening, when we heard hundreds of voices counter-cheering him by shouting *yo-sho*, Mr. Coillard said to me, 'Ah! Mr. Waddell, it is hard for that man to believe he is a sinner.'"

The ladies of the royal harem became constant attenders, but they were so afraid of sitting in the presence of their lord, that it was some time before they could be persuaded to come inside the tent. It was in the end accomplished by stratagem, on the part of Waddell. Let us hear his account of it: "Each lady is accompanied by a slave-girl, who carries her mat, and formerly the ladies commanded their slave to spread them behind the reed gable of the tabernacle, where they could hear and yet be hidden from their lord. One Sunday, however, when the service was begun, and they were about to squat

in the same old place, I lifted one of the mats, and with all the courtesy of a Barotsi aristocrat, said to the most handsome of these dames (that is, judging by weight), 'Do come inside, my mother.' And before she had time to reflect, she had followed me round the corner, where I spread the mat, and there she squatted. But on realising her position she made a remark, which is equivalent to, 'Is it possible, my brother, that you have conquered me?' On the following Sunday a place was reserved for these ladies, who as usual arrived during the singing. But before they had time *to take snuff*, Mr. Coillard put down his book and went out to get the mats, which he spread close to the pulpit. Then he made a sign with his hand, and the ladies came forward, but they appeared very nervous at this breach of Barotsi etiquette, and to the end of the singing looked at each other in bewilderment, while their lord, who was on the opposite side, stood biting his tongue to keep from laughter. At last they sat down, and the battle was won, and that piece of Barotsi superstition got a final blow."

With these words Waddell's journal breaks off, and his later letters have been destroyed. Some jottings carry us a little further; we find him in October of the same year at Sefula, making seats for the church, but for the most part we are dependent on others, or on our recollections of his conversation, for the story of his last year on the Zambesi. Although his diary bears no reference to it, he was very ill during the building of the church. He suffered from such stinging pains in the feet that he could not sleep, and the natives would bring damp grass for him to stand on,



while he worked. "But," says Miss Kiener, "he never abandoned his work, which grew enormous in the last year." Every day he toiled through the mid-day heat without a rest. There was an entire absence of drinkable water on the station; it was two hours for a good walker to fetch any, and when he was parched with thirst, there was often nothing to drink but green, stagnant, muddy water, alive with toads and other creatures, in which men, women, and children bathed promiscuously. All the time he was on the Zambesi he was never in bed at breakfast-time, but often he was on his feet, and at his work, so shaken with fever that he hardly knew what he was doing. There could be but one end to this. However, he struggled on for the next year with a heroic doggedness. We catch some interesting glimpses of his life during these silent months from Coillard's letters. An apparatus for a tube well, which was to end all their water troubles, arrived, and Waddell could hardly contain himself for joy. "Two hours, and I shall have it going," he exclaimed. But this time he had to confess failure. After toiling from morning till night for weeks, the last tube was sunk, but no water came! It was too short.

One of the visitors who came to inspect the church in course of erection was Queen Mokwaë. She pretended to be immensely interested as Coillard explained the various parts, and took her round the other buildings of the Mission, but at a certain point she dropped on a chair, tore her shoes from her feet, and threw them on the ground. "My father," she said, "give me some medicine for my feet; they are hurting me dreadfully."

"Medicine for the feet! Come, Mokwaë, put these boots aside, they are too small for you."

"Then my father will give me his shoes."

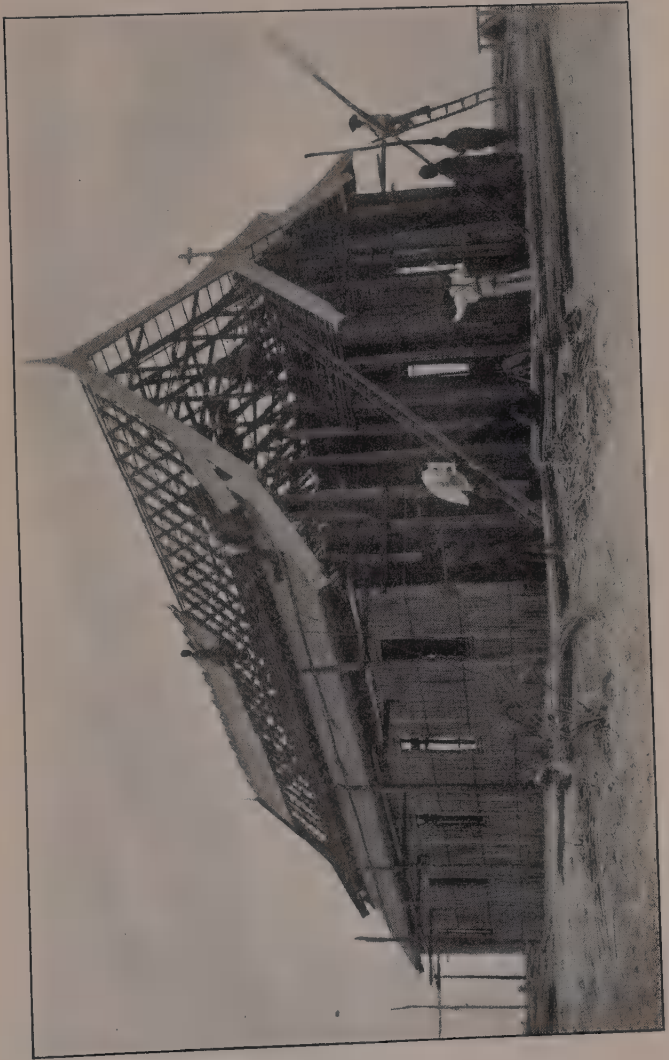
"Mine would not fit you, Mokwaë."

"Ah!" she said, casting her eyes on Waddell's shoes, "there are some that will do."

"I have no others, *Morena*," said Waddell. "And you wish the *Morena Mokwaë* to go barefoot?" demanded the Queen. For once Waddell found himself without an answer.

While the building of the church was proceeding, other improvements were being carried out for the comfort of the Station. A causeway was laid between it and the village so that the people might come and go dryshod in time of flood and bad weather. "Strange! women and children can even in winter splash through mud and water," wrote Coillard, "for the sake of selling a little flour or getting a few beads, and the men do not hesitate to do the same thing, in order to come and lounge about, but on Sunday it is cold; they are afraid of the water, they have no canoes, and how can they come to the preaching?" A canal also was constructed, and Waddell threw a bridge across it, under which the canoes might pass, which was the wonder, and at first the terror of the Barotsi. They declared they could never venture on it. The very thought of it hurt the soles of their feet, and made them feel giddy. But the boys led the way, other venturesome spirits followed, and the bridge became the fashion. Only the aristocrats tabooed it, fearing to compromise their dignity, and continued to cross by canoe.

On the 11th of March, 1894, the church was dedi-





cated. The event lasted over two days, and both king and people seemed to be impressed. "What other white man has ever taken the trouble," said Lewanika, making a speech to his people, "to put up a building, not for his own exclusive use but for ours? Do you not see that there is something within the breast of these missionaries? What advantage do they reap by wearying themselves thus for us? Say! And you, Barotsi, who despise their instruction and refuse to send your children to school, are you so very wise and intelligent? Perish our customs and superstitions! They keep us chained in darkness and carry us on to ruin. I see it! Yes, I see it!" Poor Lewanika, how often has he professed to see it! A hymn was struck up, and king, chiefs, and people formed a procession and marched into the church, while Waddell occupied his usual post as policeman at the door. The service lasted two hours, and attention and seriousness were maintained to the close. That in itself was no small victory, for the Barotsi live to be amused. The last thing they ever think of is to be serious. There is nothing serious to them in life. They never say that a man is in good health, but that he "is amusing himself." If all is well at the Capital, their way of expressing it is, "The king is amusing himself, and the drums are still beating." How difficult was the task of Coillard and Waddell in sowing the first seeds of the Gospel in such a shallow soil can be understood. On the momentary seriousness of the people, or even of the king, they could place little reliance.

On the day following the dedication came the school examination and a treat for the children.

Though far from well and suffering great pain, Waddell threw himself into the games of the children with his usual zest, and greatly delighted them with a rocket exhibition at the close. Altogether it was a red-letter day. Waddell's church remains still the church of Lealui, admired for its beauty by native and missionary, and a monument to his skill and industry, in the face of extraordinary difficulties.

Some time before this, he had met Louise Keck, who had come to take charge of the school in Sesheke, and be a companion to her sister, Mrs. Goy, wife of one of the missionaries. Miss Keck was an accomplished woman, the daughter of a French missionary in Basutoland, and by her knowledge of the language and customs of the country was admirably fitted to be the wife of a missionary. Waddell became engaged to her, and a new brightness and happiness came into his life. Coillard was delighted, and felt that with the addition of Miss Keck to the Lealui mission, its prosperity would be secured. So Waddell began to make preparations for setting up house at the Capital. It was no light task, for all his furniture had to be made with his own hand.

But before his marriage it was imperative, in the critical state of his health, that he should go on furlough. "He suffered more and more," says Miss Kiener. And the prospect of seeing once more his dear ones, and seeking new strength in the homeland, filled him with delight. "Waddell is going to Scotland," wrote Coillard. "He has well earned this rest. Devoted as he was personally to my dear wife and myself, it is for the Mission that he has toiled and exhausted his strength. Mr. Waddell is not an

ordinary workman. When I think of his capacities as a cabinetmaker, of the wages he was earning, of all the efforts that were made to secure his services, I say that this man, in giving himself as he did for our Mission, which was still only a project, has given us a splendid example of self-sacrifice. Far be it from me to sound his praises! The work of his hands does that—a colossal work (let me use the word, it is not too strong), an incessant labour for nearly ten years. We *have* had missionary helpers of that stamp, such as Gosselin and Maeder, but they are rare. It is because it needs a more than ordinary measure of grace cheerfully to occupy this humble place in the mission field, and to glorify God in it. It is a living example of that beautiful word, ‘mind not high things.’”

In July, 1894, Waddell went down the river by boat to Kazungula to attend a conference of all the European missionaries on the Zambesi. What a transformation the place had undergone! Ten years before, when he crossed with the waggons, there had been nothing but a shadeless tree at the Ford, and he had slept under a poor shelter of straw. Now there was a flourishing mission station, a considerable village, and Prince Litia was about to be installed as Prefect of Kazungula. Flags floated on the trees, and a motto of welcome was displayed on the bank, as Coillard and he reached the landing-place. No sooner were they on dry land, than a circle was formed, and all joined in a hymn of thanksgiving.

It was Waddell's intention to return to Lealui after the conference, make his final preparations, put the cart in order for the journey down-country, and start with

Coillard in a few weeks. But he became too ill to return, and Coillard had to go back without him. Though he little knew it, he had left Lealui for ever. At the age of thirty-six his active work was done. The story we have now to tell, in place of the strenuous labours of these past years, is one of increasing pain and weakness borne with heroic courage and cheerfulness. Few men have lived a more selfless life than Waddell during those ten years on the Zambesi. The work he did was gigantic, and though he lacked some of the gifts of the great Uganda missionary, he has not inaptly been called the "Mackay of the Zambesi." His work was purely pioneer, and he saw few fruits of his labours, but it was enough for him to know that he was doing it for his Master. On the fly-leaf of his Bible we found written, and they express the motive of his life, these words from Gladstone, "There is no greater honour to a man than to suffer for the sake of what he thinks to be righteous." Coillard and Waddell leaned on one another with a pathetic dependence, Coillard on his practical skill, and he on Coillard's spiritual strength. And if he was able to do much for Coillard, the great missionary did also much for him. In constant intercourse through years of loneliness with that heroic soul, he rose to a spiritual height that otherwise could scarcely have been possible. But seldom has it been purchased at so great a price.



## CHAPTER XI

“THEY ALSO SERVE WHO ONLY STAND AND WAIT”

FOR several months Waddell lingered on at Kazungula in great weakness, waiting for some means of getting down country. So weak was he that he began to have doubts of ever being able to return to Lealui, and wrote Coillard to this effect. “You must be very low,” writes Coillard in answer, “when you ask me to give up all hope of having your help again. It gave me a great shock, and I grieve to see you so much cast down. May the Lord bring you back a cheerful, happy man !”

At last he joined some hunters going south, in whose company he had a dreadful time. The party consisted of a gentleman's son from England, travelling with an attendant, and some native servants. The man quarrelled with his attendant, the natives ran away, and for three days the party was stuck in a bog, in a pouring rain, without fire of any kind. At last Waddell, though very ill, took the waggon in charge, and brought them to Buluwayo, where he was glad to see the end of them. Dr. Jameson, of the British South African Company, heard of his arrival, and invited him to an interview. Jameson was so impressed with the valuable information about the country which he was able to furnish, that he wired to

Rhodes in Capetown, advising him of his coming, and urging him to see him. As the first Britisher who had spent any length of time in Barotsiland, his knowledge of country and people was of the greatest service to the Company. At Buluwayo he attached himself to a Boer trekking down to Mafeking, with whom he had an equally trying experience. The Boer treated his native servant so unmercifully that he felt compelled to interfere. In the end the native escaped into "Victoria's country," "where," said the poor creature, "the Boer cannot touch me." In Mafeking, Waddell visited and spent a night with John Moffat, the missionary, son of Dr. Moffat, whose life story, as told from his mother's lips, had first kindled his missionary enthusiasm. He then came on to Kimberley, where he went into hospital, and remained for three weeks under the care of Dr. Mackenzie, son of the well-known missionary and statesman. Dr. Mackenzie seems to have diagnosed his case from the start, but did not venture to tell him the terrible truth.

All this time Coillard followed Waddell with affectionate letters, bewailing his loss at his departure.

Miss Keck, who for months had been suffering from constant fever, had also been compelled to leave the field, and this seemed to put the hope of Waddell's return to the Zambesi further off than ever. "And really, can it be," writes Coillard in April, 1895, "that we lose you altogether? To possess you with such a worthy partner as Miss Keck seemed to me a great increase of blessing. But to lose you both at once is a calamity, for which, I confess, I was not at all prepared. It is not that I personally need you. My work is nearly done, my career is nearing its end, but

you have a place among us such as a Mackay might have been proud of, and which you can get nowhere else.” Again, in July, 1895, Coillard writes: “And now, where are you? When will this reach you? In what circumstances? I think often of you, and you know with what feelings of prayerful affection. I cannot, I really cannot make up my mind that you are lost to the work and to me. I still hope that the Lord will graciously and marvellously open your way to come back. Why should you not also with your own eyes see the glory of God in that land where you have seen the glory of the Prince of Darkness? The Lord, if He needs you, as I believe He does, can say to you, ‘I am He that healeth thee, and you shall be healed.’”

When Waddell arrived in Capetown, he was sent for by Rhodes. He found the great man most kind. He was seated before large maps of the country, and proceeded at once to business. “Now follow my pencil,” he said, and together they went over the boundaries of the British Protectorate, to which a Commissioner was about to be sent. “I shall never be satisfied,” said Waddell, who was always a strong Imperialist, pointing to the map, “until all that is coloured red.” At a second interview, Rhodes discussed with him the resources of the country, in timber, iron, &c., about all of which he could give him valuable first-hand information.

He stayed a few weeks in Capetown, where he saw the work of the Salvation Army for the first time, and then sailed for England, arriving in Glasgow in June, 1895. His brother, George, who had gone to meet him at the Central Station, received a dreadful shock.

Thirteen years before he had parted with a robust, fresh-coloured young fellow, and there stood before him an old man, prematurely grey, with the stamp of death only too plain upon his face.

He came home to Apna Place, Uddingston, to spend his furlough with his mother and sister. He had planned but a short sojourn, and intended, after a six months' rest, to return to the mission field. So he set himself with a feverish eagerness to learn all he could of every branch of practical knowledge, grafting of trees, &c., which he might teach the natives. "Oh, Willie, you are too eager," his mother would often say. He had also numerous arrangements to make about boats and machinery for Mr. Coillard. Should his health not permit of his return to the Zambesi, he had thoughts of mission work at the home of Miss Keck in Basutoland. Meanwhile, Coillard was greatly missing his practical skill, and poured out his love and sense of need in his letters. "My thoughts have run after you," he writes from the lonely post at Lealui. "Oh, how I long to know how you are, and when you are coming back? I would go straight to Kazungula to welcome you back, my dear old companion. I shall anxiously await your letters." After some inquiries about designs, boats, and other things, he concludes: "You know our French word *au revoir*; it is better, more cheerful than good-bye, and it is my salutation to you. *Au revoir* then at Lealui."

The long-delayed Commissioner to Barotsiland was now on the point of leaving, and Rhodes had written to Earl Grey, Chairman of the British South African Chartered Company, advising the Commissioner to see Waddell. So in the month of December, 1895,

Grey asked Waddell to come up to London, at the Company's expense, and meet Mr. Hervey, the Commissioner, who was sailing on the 11th of January. Waddell went, and as he sat at breakfast with Earl Grey and the Commissioner, a wire arrived with the news of the Jameson Raid. They appeared so stunned and upset, that Waddell always declared that whoever were implicated in the raid, he was sure Earl Grey knew nothing of it.

While in London he went to consult Dr. Radcliffe Croker, a specialist in tropical diseases, as to his trouble. In a long interview, Croker told him that he was suffering from an incurable disease, contracted on the Zambesi, and could never hope to return. All ideas of marriage and future work must be given up. He came home to Uddingston, stunned by the dreadful blow.

As we can understand, the doctor's verdict was almost as staggering to Coillard as to Waddell. The news reached him at Buluwayo Hospital, where he had been taken ill on his way down country, *en route* for Europe. Writing in bed, 16th February, 1896, he says: “What a terrible shock, the astounding news which you break and confide in me! Can it really be possible? When Dr. Mackenzie examined you in Kimberley, he came to the same conclusion, but it seemed so extraordinary, that he took counsel with his colleagues, who evidently veiled their opinion not to crush you. I feel deeply grieved, I need not tell. It comes as a thunderstroke, upsetting all your dreams, all your plans, blighting all your prospects. And yet, what shall we say? Is it not He who has done it who never makes a mistake

and does all things well? He shall give you grace, my dear friend, and His grace shall be sufficient to you to bear, to suffer, in glorifying Him. . . . Poor Zambesi Mission! What a sifting, and at a time when all of us seemed so necessary. Good-bye, my poor friend; but no, not poor, but privileged. All that we do, endure, and suffer for His sake endears us to Jesus."

The *grace* of which Coillard speaks was given to Waddell in rare measure, and although he was now a condemned man, and his active work was done, the thirteen years that followed, before his final summons came, were in some respects the grandest years of his life.

He was slow to believe, however, that his work was ended. In the beginning of the following year (1896) he went up for six months' treatment to a London hospital. It was at the time when Dr. Jameson was lying in prison in London, and he would have greatly liked to see him, but did not find it possible. When there, he had the joy of meeting Coillard again, who had come for a missionary tour in England, with two of his Zambesi boys. He returned to Uddingston considerably improved in health, and for a time hoped that the prognostications of Dr. Croker would be falsified, and he would be able to return to the mission field. He communicated the hopeful news to Coillard, who, writing from France, August, 1896, says: "What a mercy of God that you should have so far recovered! What a joy it must have been to your sister and mother, if I judge by the joy it was to me! The Lord, in His loving-kindness, complete what He has so graciously begun! I do not despair to see

your old self once more before I return to the Zambesi. The prospect of building again is the dark shadow of my return, especially as I may not have my good old friend. Take care of yourself and make spiritual provision for Africa, wherever the Lord may lead you. It is sweet, is it not, for the pilgrim to go on rejoicing in the Lord and singing,

“‘He leadeth me! He leadeth me?’

Oh, yes, our own dear Willie, He leadeth you, and He leadeth me. Only, let us be willing to follow where He leads. I can hear nothing of my lost luggage, and I have such an urgent need of my papers and photos. But the Lord's vocabulary is not our own; what we call *urgent* He may call *useless*. When we meet I shall have a lot to ask you about boats and many other things.” Again, in September of the same year, Coillard writes from France: “If only you knew how rich you are in friends, and how many everywhere inquire after you. It is well known, I daresay, that you are one of the founders of our Mission.” Up to the end of 1896 Waddell still had some faint hope of being able to return, if not to the Zambesi, at least to Basutoland. In December we find Coillard writing to him: “I wonder when you shall be able to decide definitely about your future. You think, and make us think, that it is out of the question to return to the Zambesi, but you have never said so positively. Do your plans take a more definite shape about your future and your marriage?” But it soon became evident that all dreams of future work or marriage must be finally abandoned. For a time he seemed to be recovering, but a violent attack



of influenza during this winter put an end to all hope, and Waddell had to set his face to the dark future. He had now a clear understanding of the ordeal he was to be called upon to face, but he went to meet it bravely. His engagement was finally broken off. Miss Keck, in great distress, wrote offering to come to Scotland and nurse him, but as he had a loving mother and sister beside him, her kindly offer was declined. This lady continues to-day in mission work in Basutoland, one of the most highly respected of the Basutoland missionaries. In the Boer war her home was raided, and Waddell's gun, which had kept hunger many times from his door, and which was now in her possession, was commandeered by the Boers.

During this year Khama visited Glasgow, and Waddell went to see his old friend. Khama greeted him in *Sesuto* as soon as he caught sight of him, and the two revived memories of old days. His other royal friend, Lewanika, also did not forget him, and sent him about this time a present of a handsome leopard skin.

Coillard had great faith in Waddell's judgment on all practical matters, and during his stay in Europe kept sending him continually letters of inquiry. "Remember about the boats; go to the Clyde, the place of all places in the world to see wonders, and tell me something of what you see, with perhaps a little drawing." Writing from France in January, 1897, he says: "I have been to see some very ingenious houses; the frame is iron tube, strong and light, the walls are made of a thick metallic matting. I wish you knew the English house where such things are made, that you might express an opinion."



For the whole of that year Waddell was able to go about, although he was never free from pain. His thoughts were continually occupied with the Mission. He went to the boat-yards, examined machinery, and constructed models and patterns for Coillard. As late as May, 1898, we find Coillard, still in the country, writing: “What about the bedstead and chair for travelling? Can you attend to that without much fatigue? I do not want to bother you, and yet I know what a pleasure it is to you to do something for your old friend.” But the next letter brought him bad news, and in August he writes: “I was greatly grieved to hear of you not being so well. The Lord deal with you tenderly. Do not trouble about my things; I am not in a great hurry.”

Later in the same month he writes: “I long to know how you are. The last account you gave of yourself was far from good. How often I do think of you. Do not have any hard thoughts, my dear Waddell, about the Lord’s dealings with you. To accept meekly the Lord’s will is to do it. Never doubt but that all things must work together for your good. What you have done for Him is not vain. You have sowed, but you shall certainly reap. The time of my leaving is drawing nigh. When I think of all that is before me, and you, my dear fellow, are not with me, courage fails me. The man who could have done something of what you did fails me at the last moment.”

Coillard sailed from Europe for the last time in December, 1898, but before his departure came to see Waddell. It was their last meeting. The old man

was loath and sad to go away without his brave helper, but he saw only too clearly that though the spirit still was willing, the flesh was growing every day weaker.

We shall pass briefly over the next years of Waddell's life. They were years of constant pain and languishing, but the last thing he would have wished was that we should enlarge upon his sufferings. Though, truly, if ever man was made perfect by suffering, it was he.

So long as he was able he did what services he could for the Mission, and kept up a regular correspondence with the missionaries on the field. He was also fond of reading, and read widely in biography, history, and travel. But as his trouble proceeded, his eyesight began to go, and latterly failed so rapidly that, by the beginning of 1901, he was totally blind. He saw the first buildings of the Glasgow Exhibition in process of construction in 1900, and looked forward to it greatly, but before the opening day he could see no more. All this time he was suffering great pain. Before his blindness came on he endured torturing pains in the head, which were like to drive him crazy. But through all he maintained a bright and happy spirit. "Pains to right of me," he would say blithely in his worst moments, "pains to left of me, pains in front of me, shooting and stinging." He said he had every kind of pain, the "jumping kind," the "throbbing kind," and the "stinging kind." The pains in his hands and feet were as if thumbscrews and toe-screws were clamped upon them. When suffering agonies from neuralgia, he would say brightly, "Just another to the number to keep me from weary-

ing.” Nothing could daunt his heroic, happy spirit. He became crippled and helpless, as well as blind, but went on glorifying God in the fire.

It was a great regret to him that he could not go and meet Lewanika when he visited this country in 1902, to attend the coronation. Lewanika was greatly distressed to hear of his sad condition, and kept repeating, “Poor Willie.”

During these years of trial nothing brought him greater comfort than the letters that came from Coillard. Twice a year, at least, Coillard found time to write him a long letter, giving him all the news of the work. “It grieves me deeply,” he writes from Lealui in 1901, “to think of you as a blind man, and I wish it were in my power to relieve you by nursing or reading. All I can do is to pray that God’s countenance may shine all the more brightly in your soul. Your song now must be more than ever—

“‘Sun of my soul, Thou Saviour dear,  
It is not *night* if Thou be near.’

Be of good cheer, my dear friend. In the hands of God you are in good hands. . . . Strange to say, the young fall and I am still standing. Has the Lord some need of me yet? But I have grown lazy; the very prospect of some manual work makes me shrink, and yet I have no more, and never shall have a kind Waddell to do things for me.”

Over and over again in his letters does the sense of loss at Waddell’s withdrawal find expression. “How often I wish I had you here as in days gone by,” we find him writing in February, 1902. “It is a great trial of faith to know that you are suffering, that you

are blind. I cannot realise it, nor the people either. They all inquire after you, and ask if you are not better. Many of them cannot understand the dealings of God with His people."

In October, 1902, he writes: "I think much of you, and talk of you. I fear sometimes I may set you up as a pattern in such a way that my friends may see it as a sign of my growing old. Ah! there are many things that make me think and talk of you. The footbridge, although repaired repeatedly, has grown so old and shaky, and the people are so fond of picking up any loose pieces of wood that we are obliged to pull it down altogether. It is no more safe to pass over. It is painful to me, as it is one of your last works here. I live again those wonderful days of 1891, and I am sure you will think of and pray for me as a beloved friend. We have suffered together; you have upheld me when I was sinking; those times are not to be forgotten. . . . I do not write such long letters to everybody, but you are somebody, and that is why."

The next letter, February, 1903, tells of the return of Lewanika from his visit to this country. "His visit to Scotland made a deep impression on him, and those who accompanied him. He was touched by the kindness showered on him by our friends, all Christians. He could not have believed that people could be so kind, and nothing could explain it to him but the love of God in their hearts." How much the old man missed Waddell can be learned from a sentence in the same letter: "I am very badly housed, and it has been impossible to find anyone to build me a proper house. And now I am getting old, and I

don't care for it much. I long for the heavenly mansions where I am going, the land of light and rest.”

The next letter in our hands is dated from Lealui, March, 1894. It concludes: “Good-bye, my dear Waddell. You are not forgotten here. We often speak of you, and your works do so still better than we. May you enjoy more and more the light of God's countenance! My affectionate regards to your dear mother and sister and brother, your faithful friend—F. Coillard.” These were the last words he received from the best friend he ever had on earth, outside his own home. The death of Coillard in May, 1904, some two months after the above letter was written, was a great shock to Waddell. He had lately been saddened by the deaths of other friends on the mission field, and he began to look and long for his release. He knew that for him there was nothing but increasing pain and weakness this side the veil.

## CHAPTER XII

### THE CLOSING YEARS

IT was my good fortune to see much of Waddell during the last four years of his life, and to enjoy many a long talk about those days on the Zambesi. As was natural to one blind, and laid aside from active service, he loved to dwell in the past and speak about his work. If he had the slightest suspicion that you wished to make a hero of him, he shrank back into his shell and would say no more. But if you allowed him to talk on in his own way, with that doric which Africa left untouched, the scenes came vividly before your eyes, and you felt as if you were actually with him on the field. He liked especially to speak of Lewanika, and tell of their conversations, as the king sat beside him for hours in his workshop watching him at his craft. And you could not be long in his company without perceiving that the hero of his heart was Coillard. It may be said that he laid down his life for Jesus Christ and François Coillard.

But he did not dwell only in the past; he was keenly interested in all that went on in the present, down to the latest newspaper event. However, the focus of his interest was missions, and he studied closely the progress of missionary work all over the world. The Mission with which he had been con-

nected occupied, of course, first place, and he followed all that was going on in Barotsiland down to the minutest detail. Neither, to its honour, did the Mission forget him. The Paris Evangelical Mission kept in close touch with him, and though it had no legal obligations, gave him a generous allowance to the end, and in every way showed an appreciation of his work. And when any of its missionaries were in this country, they never failed to come and see him, and bring greetings from the field.

I refrain to speak of his sufferings during those last years, except to say that no man I ever knew suffered so greatly. The disease made slow but fatal progress, and the pain he had to endure was at times excruciating. But he bore his sufferings with heroic cheerfulness. "I have not only to suffer," he would say, "but suffer willingly and cheerfully, and I'll try to do it." He had his moments of depression, but they were passing, and few men have borne so heavy a burden with so brave a heart. He greatly missed the privilege of going to church and sharing in the inspiration of common worship. "If only I could go and hear them sing," he would often say.

During those four years sorrow twice visited the home and left him lonelier. In 1906 his brother David was taken suddenly from a life of usefulness, leaving a widow and two young boys. And it greatly perplexed him that the active should be taken and he should be left. In the following year his mother died. On her had fallen the sad lot of sitting day by day beside him and watching with pain his slow decline, a burden which she bore bravely. Her going home left a great blank in his life, and he prayed that his

call might soon come. Every morning when his mother came into his room she took up her New Testament and read a chapter to him. "You are just my chaplain," he would say in his cheery way. Though he could not see his mother's ageing face, he watched with sorrow her voice growing feebler and feebler. Then came the day when she could come to his room no longer, and he sat beside her in her bedroom with stricken heart, while her life flickered out.

All these years he was tenderly nursed by a loving sister. What she did for him no one, save God, knows. She gave twelve years of her life to tending him. For seven years she was never out of the house a single night, and in the last years was seldom out by day. Her face paled and her hair whitened, but she carried through her task, for she felt it was given her of God to do. His one great fear was lest she would be taken away before him, but he was spared this trial, though before the end her strength was nearly spent. She showed an unselfishness and self-sacrifice worthy to be set beside his own.

Despite his great weakness of body, his mental faculties remained to the close as clear as day. He took great pleasure in reading, and book after book was read to him by his sister. He loved especially missionary biography. The "Life of Coillard," published in 1907, was devoured with eagerness. The last book that was read to him was the "Life of Stewart of Lovedale," who was a man after his own heart.

The closing days were very pathetic. My "fear is not to die, but to live," he said to his sister. He spoke frequently of the joy of getting home. "There will



be no more pain," he would say. "My! will that no be grand!"

Through all the extreme sufferings of the last weeks there never escaped a murmur or a grumble. Once, when his sister quite broke down at the sight of what he had to endure, he sharply rebuked her. To a man in the same street whom he knew to be dying he sent the message: "Tell him that there's a grand time coming."

During the last three weeks he was confined to bed, but remained conscious to the last. "It can't be long now," he said to his sister, "soon all will be over." Latterly his voice failed, and he could only speak in whispers. On Easter morning his sister read to him the Easter Service from the Book of Common Prayer, which was a great favourite. Easter always came to him with a new reviving.

"Up from the grave He arose  
With a mighty triumph o'er His foes,"

he often sang in other days, for he loved to sing. All that was past for him, but his gracious, thankful spirit showed itself to the end. Nothing put to his lips would he touch until he had first asked a blessing. On Sabbath afternoon his sister offered him a cup of milk. "Wait a bit," he said, and he bowed his head and said grace before he touched it, though he could hardly speak. He took but a drop, and it was the last food he tasted. Later in the evening Miss Waddell heard him trying to speak, and bending over him caught the words, "Peace, perfect peace," but his voice died away in the effort. He spent some restless hours, and about one o'clock in the morning

said to his sister, "I think I'll rest now, good-night." They were the last words he spoke, he fell asleep and never woke. The rest he longed for was come at last. He had, to use a favourite phrase of his, "outspanned for the last time." He died on the 12th of April, 1909, at the age of fifty-one.

It is needless for me to review his life and character, for his journal, from which I have often quoted, has already spoken for itself. He was a man of faith. He lived under the power of the Unseen. God's presence and guidance were very real facts to his soul. He never blamed the hand that had so sorely smitten him. If he blamed anyone, it was himself for not having been more careful of his life and opportunity. His one regret was that he had not been able to do far more, and had left so much undone. "Yes, knowing all it would mean," he would say, "I would do it again to-morrow, and count it a privilege."

He was one of the most modest men I have known, and never would allow one to say that he had done anything of any consequence. Some time before his death he asked his sister to burn his papers, which she had the good sense not to do. He took as much trouble to avoid fame as some do to obtain it. But a life like this, even though spent far away on the Zambesi, cannot, and certainly ought not, to be hid.

No feature of his character was more admirable than his indomitable cheerfulness. His was a truly invincible spirit. Like Paul, he was "troubled on every side, yet not distressed, perplexed but not in despair, cast down, but not destroyed, always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that

the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in his body." So far from being a canvasser for sympathy, he exercised a ministry of sympathy and comfort in the village which was his home. People came to him with their burdens, and never went away without a lightened heart. The cheery "Come in" with which he greeted your voice at the door was an inspiration in itself. Many a time have I come away ashamed and reproached at my little faith, when I saw the faith and courage with which he carried his terrible burden. Few saw him during the later years, but those who enjoyed that unspeakable privilege realised that he had far more to give them than they could ever give him.

After his death testimonies as to his life and work came from many quarters. We shall quote but two. M. A. Boegner, Director of the Paris Evangelical Mission, wrote: "He has been a devoted servant to the Mission. He was truly selfless and wholly consecrated to the Master. His personal affection for M. Coillard was to our great missionary a comfort and a strength. The way in which he accepted his painful condition, his patience and childlike submission to the Will of God, has been perhaps a greater testimony of his faith than his work itself. He has glorified the Lord still more in his sufferings than by his labours."

And his old co-worker, Miss Kiener, wrote: "Mr. Waddell is not forgotten on the Zambesi, either by king or people, who knew him as 'the man who could do all works,' and always found in him a friend ready to help. And we who loved him greatly missed him, and suffered with him in his sufferings.

His piety was deep, and his ardent desire was always to glorify God. It is a mystery that one so useful should have become the victim of so terrible a malady."

Now he rests from his labours and his sufferings, and his works do follow him.

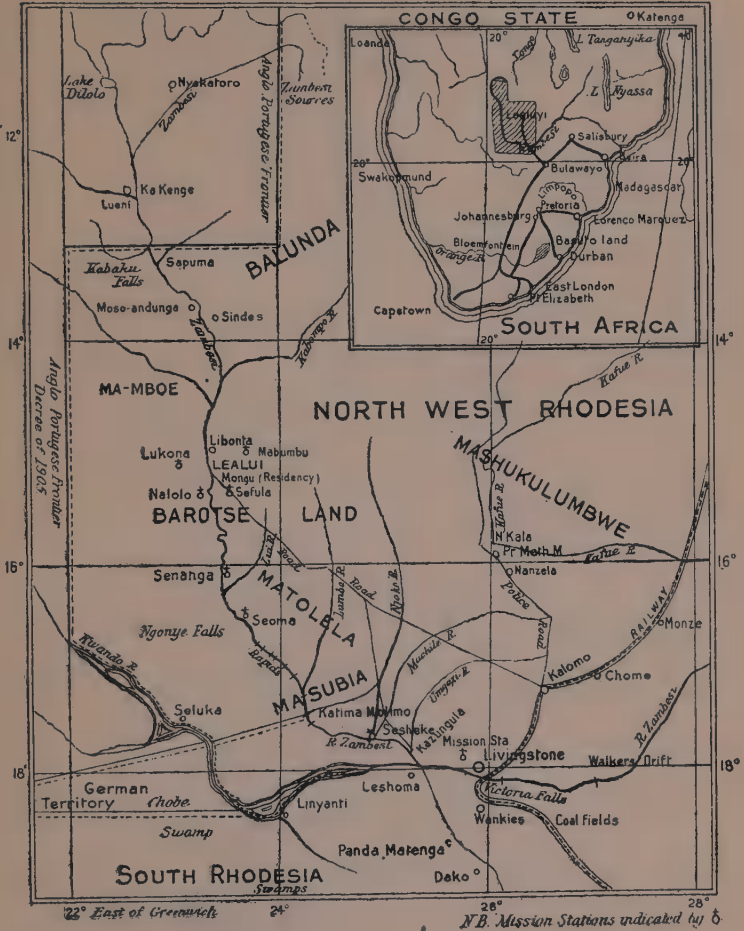
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**SKETCH MAP to illustrate  
BAROTSE-LAND MISSION.**

*For Roads and Minor Rivers  
the general direction only  
is indicated.*



*N.B. Mission Stations indicated by ⚪*









MacConnachie, John, 1875-1948.

525  
522  
36  
An artisan missionary on the Zambesi; being  
the life story of William Thomson Waddell,  
largely drawn from his letters and journals.  
With introduction by W.C. MacKintosh ... New  
York, American Tract Society [1910?]  
x, 156p. map, port. 20cm.

1. Waddell, William Thomson, 1858-1909.  
I. Title.

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